

# WIRE



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NEW MUSIC

ISSUE 84 AUGUST 1991 \$4.00 £1.75

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- Europe** ㉓ *Is this the new world? R D Cook ponders*
- FMP** ㉔ *A great European label by Steve Lake*
- Where It Happens** ㉕ *The Festivals*
- New York** ㉖ *Uptown, downtown, Howard Mandel*
- Hardwire** ㉗ *New techno with Tom Corbin*
- The Charts** ㉘ *This month's league tables*
- Soundcheck** ㉙ *What's new on disc*
- The Write Place** ㉚ *Where readers take the mike*

*We regret our cover price increase to £1.95 from this issue. It's the times.*

wire

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• **Editor/Publisher Richard Cook** • **Deputy Editor Graham Lock** • **Art Director Brooke Auchincloss-Foreman** • **Contributing Editor Mark Sinker** •  
• **Administration Manager Adele Yaron** • **Advertising Manager Roger Thomas** • **Founder Anthony Wood** •

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**contributors:** Mike Aspinall, Richard Barrett, Karri Bennett, Jonathan Cox, Jack Cooks, Tom Corbin, Mike Fish, John Fordham, Martin Gwyford, Paul Gubbey, Andy Hamilton, Tony Heronson, David Hor, Nick Kimberley, Boba Koff, Russell Lock, Steve Lake, Vanessa Lyons, Howard Mandel, Kenny Matheson, Brian Morton, Stuart Nicholson, Chris Parker, Brian Precourt, Roland Ramanow, Richard Scott, Sue Steward, Ben Watson, Philip Watson, Val Wilson, Barry Withende, Mike Zuercher

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## VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

GREENWICH GUITAR maestro Billy Jenkins takes his Voice Of God Collective on a rare UK tour this month. The Voice – featuring Iain Ballamy (saxes), Steve Watts (bass), Roy Dodds (drums) – can be heard at Bristol Albert Inn (10 February); Chester Gateway Theatre (11); Manchester Band On The Wall (14); Lancaster venue (15); Leeds Trades Club (16); Coventry Warwick University Arts Centre (28). Tour details from organisers Jazz North West on 051 708 8771.

A different Voice – with Mark Lockheart, Stuart Hall, Roy Dodds – can be heard improvising to silent films at London's Camden Parkway Cinema on 10 March, as part of the Camden Festival

## TWO LIPS FROM AMSTERDAM

REEDSMAN WILLEM Breuker leads his ten-piece Kollektief on a Contemporary Music Network tour in March. They go Dutch at London QEH (14 March); Leicester Haymarket (17); Manchester RNCM (20); Birmingham Adrian Boult Hall (21); Oxford Sheldonian Theatre (22); Leeds Trade Club (23); Bristol Theatre Royal (24); Exeter St George's Hall (25); Bracknell Wilde Theatre (26). Details from CMN on 071 333 0100.

## ANDY'S DANDIES

BIRMINGHAM'S septuagenarian sax star Andy Hamilton has an all-star lineup of friends on his very first recording, scheduled for April release on World Circuit's new jazz label. Guests on the date

include David Murray, Harry 'Sweets' Edison, Courtney Pine, Steve Williams, Andy Sheppard, Jean Toussaint, Fine Young Cannibals Graeme Hamilton (Andy's son) and Mark Mondiear. The recording sessions, held in London last December, were filmed for BBC 2's *Rhythms Of The World* series.

## CATCH THE COLTRANE

HIGHLIGHT OF Channel 4's current *Jazz On A Winter's Night* series is sure to be *The Coltrane Legacy*, due for broadcast on 30 January. Channel 4 claim that the programme "brings together almost all the known television footage of Coltrane", including performances from 1959 with the Miles Davis Quintet and from 1961 and 1963 with his own quartet. Among the compositions heard are "Impressions", "My Favourite Things", "Afro Blue", "Alabama" and "Every Time We Say Goodbye". The series continues into February with *Joe Williams – At The Smithsonian* (6), *Benny Carter – At The Smithsonian* (13); *Chick The Changes*, on the New York jazz scene (20).

Meanwhile, Radio 3 jazz highlights in February include live-concert recordings of the Chick Corea Elektric Band (11, 10pm) and the Andy Sheppard/Kerth Tippert duo (25, time tba).

## LET'S GET INTENSE

LONDON'S COMMUNITY Music project is offering a series of intensive music courses at North London's Isledon Road Centre during the next few months. Courses available include Voice – Be-

ginners (16, 17 February) and Improvisation (9, 10 March), Music Technology – Beginners (16, 17 February) and Intermediate (2, 3 March), Songwriting (2, 3 March). Courses run from 10am–4.30pm and costs are £45 (concessions £30). Details from 071 485 8553.

## GEE WHIZZES ON!

PIANIST JONATHAN Gee and drummer Peter Fairclough take their groups on brief UK tours this month. The Gee trio, with bassist Wayne Batchelor and drummer Winston Clifford, goes along to Bristol Albert Inn (17 February), London Vortex (20), Cardiff Four Buses Inn (21), Oxford Mitre (22), Ditchester Castleford School (23), Welwyn Garden City Golf Complex (24), Wakefield Sports Club (8 March), Sheffield Leadmill (10, lunchtime). Details from 081 556 7883.

The Fairclough quartet, with Tim Whitehead (tenor sax), Nick Fletcher (guitar), Tim Harries (bass), peters along to Sheffield Leadmill (24 February, lunchtime), Lichfield Arts Centre (24, evening), London Willesden Green Library Centre (27), Exeter Arts Centre (2 March). Details from 0742 685137.

## BRUM DRUM COUP DO

PERCUSSION ACE Pete Enskine will join forces with dance troupe Kokuma for a special project at Birmingham's Midlands Arts Centre on 5 and 6 April. Enskine, well-known for his involvement with music-theatre, will play a set with Kokuma preceded by a jazz set from his quartet (with

Kenny Wheeler, John Taylor and Mick Hutton).

And Birmingham hosts another special with a concert by the Mike Gibbs Big Band at the Adrian Boult Hall on 23 February. Both events are part of the "Creative Facility Series" run by Birmingham Jazz, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group and the Arts Council's CMN. Details from 021 236 1555.

## DRUM ON!

DRUMMER ED Blackwell, who has been a dialysis patient since 1973 as a result of renal failure, has been selected by the National Kidney Foundation of Connecticut to be the founding inductee in their Hall of Fame. Blackwell, who lives in Connecticut where he teaches at Wesleyan University, Middletown, is the first individual to be acknowledged by the Foundation in this way, "in recognition of (his) motivation to continue (his) work in music, travelling and recording in spite of this kidney failure, and inspiring other patients by the example of (his) quiet courage and will not only to survive but to live".

The Foundation is sponsoring a tribute concert and reception at Wesleyan University on 16 Feb to which Omette Coleman, Max Roach, David Murray, Anthony Braxton, Charlie Haden, Dewey Redman and Don Cherry will be invited to play. Bill Cosby will MC.

## SWANNING IT

WEST LONDON has a new jazz venue on Tuesday evenings. Saxophonist Godfrey Talbot (of the group Nancy) is organising weekly concerts at The Swan, 40 Hammersmith

Broadway, W6. Entrance fee is approx £3.50, the concerts last from 8pm-11pm (usually featuring two different artists/groups) and the music will be "going towards the experimental end of the market". February bookings are Lol Coxhill (5); Elton Dean Trio, Brian Godding (12); John Stevens's SME, John Rangelcroft (19); Evan Parker, Mark Hewins (26). Details from 081 748 1043.

# **BILL HARDMAN, AARON COPLAND**

**HARDTOP TRUMPETER**  
Bill Hardman died in Paris on 5 December, aged 57. Born in Cleveland, Ohio on 6 April 1933, he was best-known for his many stints with both Charles Mingus and Art Blakey, as well as for appearances with Horace Silver, Lou Donaldson and Junior Cook, with the latter of whom he co-led a group that toured Europe and the US in the late 70s and early 80s. In the early 70s he also led his own group, Brass Company.

The celebrated US composer Aaron Copland died on 2 December, just a few weeks after his 90th birthday. Born in Brooklyn on 14 November 1900, Copland studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, returning to the US in 1924 to become one of his country's most adventurous young composers. An early enthusiasm for dissonance and rhythmic complexity later gave way to an interest in more popular forms, such as ballet and film music. His best-known works include the *Piano Variations*, the *Piano Sonata*, the *Clarinet Concerto* (written for Benny Goodman) and the ballets *Billy The Kid*, *Rodeo* and *Appalachian Spring*.



DAVE WILKINS photo by VAL WILMER.

## **DAVE WILKINS**

*A tribute by Val Wilmer*

**BARRADOS-BORN**  
Dave Wilkins, who died on 26 November at the age of 76, was one of the most influential trumpeters of his generation. His schooling was confined to the Salvation Army and a correspondence course, yet in 1938, within a year of arriving in the UK to join the West Indian Dance Orchestra fronted by Guyanese dancer Ken 'Smokeups' Johnson, he was on record, backing Fats Waller's vocals on the pianist's legendary London jams, as well as broadcasting with other top dancebands.

Although Black entertainers had been part of the local scene from before the days of recording, Johnson's regular broadcasts from the Café de Paris

established a presence it was hard to overlook. Wilkins, featured on Armstrong-inspired trumpet and vocals, became almost a household name. When the Orchestra's meteoric career came to a tragic end with the death of the leader and saxophonist David Williams in the Blitz, the profession mourned, but Wilkins went on to an unending round of 'name' danceband work supplemented by jam-sessions with everyone from Belgian trumpeter Johnny Claes to up-and-coming saxophonist Kathy Stobart.

Trinidadian clarinettist Carl Barrebeau, who had come to Britain with Wilkins, attempted to reform the Johnson Orchestra without much success, and the trumpeter joined clarinettist Harry Parry in the company of fellow Johnsonites, guitarist Joe Deniz and pianist

Yorke de Souza. When trumpeter Leslie 'Jiver' Hutchinson again tried to reform, Wilkins joined him, but, unable to secure the financial backing Ken Johnson had enjoyed, the musicians were forced to seek more secure employment.

In joining Ted Heath, the leading danceband, Wilkins's dream came true. At the same time he was able to switch from the split lead he played with Hutchinson which, he felt, taxed an often uncertain lip, and stay in the middle register which better suited his playing. Much admired by his team-mates - "Dave was magnificent," says Ronnie Hughes, his replacement - he hid self-doubt and shyness behind a Joe E Brown-type grin and 'anything goes' reputation. His Louis Jordan comedy vocals in partnership with trombonist Jackie Armstrong built him such a fanclub following that no one suspected he often disliked clowning and would have preferred to stick to his horn.

When I met him in 1960, he was enjoying a brief spell of popularity, playing in the mainstream idiom with people like Bruce Turner and Wally Fawkes. There had been palatial jobs, summer seasons and panto and endless Soho drinking clubs, but he was amazed that I, as a youngster, should know of his connection with Johnson, Ambrose and Waller. A brief friendship followed, only renewed a few years ago when he emerged from a lengthy and traumatic hospitalisation, unable to play. He spent his last nine years with a Trinidadian family in North London. At his funeral Frank Holder sang "The Lord's Prayer" and Harry Beckett played solo trumpet in tribute.



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MORE RHYTHM LESS RINDS

\* denotes that other concerts at this venue are listed in the next section.  
pp 4-5 Please note that the deadline for March listings is 1 February.

#### Aberdeen Cowlair Hall

(0224 641122)

Chuck Lyall Duo/Quartet

Alvingham Village Hall

(0507 527359)

John Burgess Band

Barnet Old Ball (081 449 0048)

Alan Skodmore Qtr

Mervyn Africa

Alan Weekes Qtr

Bath Alvin Club (0275 333423)

Tommy Chase

University Hall (0223 826777)

Human Chain

Birmingham Adren Bunk Hall

(021 236 3880)\*

Andrew Hall/Josham

Kuhn/Howard Riley/

Jason Rebello

Midlands Arts Centre

(021 440 3838)

John Taylor/

Palle Danielson/

Jon Christensen

Bracknell South Park Park

(0344 484123)

Corner Pocket

Brentwood Musley's Club

(0277 210897)

Julian Argüelles Qtr

Dudley Phillips Band

Lloyd Ryan Qtr

Brighton Corniche (0273 500540)

Sean Tracey Qtr

Gardner Arts Centre (0273 583861)

Andrew Hall/Josham

Kuhn/Howard Riley/

Jason Rebello

Bristol Albion Inn

(0272 661968)

Lazaro Gardony/George

Haslam

Chris Buscoe Qtr

Burgh Village Hall

(0734 810474)

John Burgess Band

Cambridge Flemards

(0223 62350)

Nick Stevens Septet

w/Annie Whitehead

Argüelles

Bobby Wellins Qtr

Zala - tribute to Dudu

Pukwana

Canterbury Centre

(0227 457059)

Pinkie Zoo (rbc)

Cardiff Four Bar One

(0222 340 519)

Chris Buscoe Qtr

Cheltenham Pinner Rooms

(0242 523600)

Andy Sheppard Qtr

Colchester Arts Centre

(0206 577301)

Lloyd Ryan Qtr

Ed Jones Qtr

Evan Parrott/Eddie

Prevost/Rohan De Saum

Darlington Great Hall

(0803 861073)

Andrew Hall/Josham

Kuhn/Howard Riley/

Jason Rebello

Dursley Pinner Arts Centre

(0453 860703)

The Plain Truth

Keith & Julie Tippett

East Barkwith Village Hall

(0673 858239)

John Burgess Band

Exeter Arts Centre (0392 239741)

Argüelles

Farnham Meadows

(0428 660794)

Peter Scollery Qtr

Glasgow Henry Wood Hall

(041 552 3223)

Chick Lyall Duo/Quartet

Hemel Hempstead Blue Note

(0442 242827)

Traco

Bjargo Bares Qtr

Leeds Derivation Out

(015325 480454)

Ben Crossland Qtr

Grupo Son Tropical

Quemada

Jazz Madmen

Llantwit Major St David's Arts

Centre (0151 708 8771)

John Taylor/

Palle Danielson/

Jon Christensen

Long Sutton St Mary's Church

(0406 23360)

John Burgess Band

Maldstone Naxos Theatre

(089282 2254)

Roadside Picnic

Pressa Express (089282 2254)

Sean Tracey Trio

Manchester Band On The Wall

(061 832 6625)\*

Ed Jones Qtr

Tommy Chase Qtr

Mervyn Africa Qtr

Chris Buscoe Qtr

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Live

Events (091 261 2604)

Jason Rebello

Leff (livehouse concerts)

Beep, Bap, Bop

The Plain Truth

Sid Warren Qtr

The Safe Secret

Oxford Capes Circus College

(0805 09349)

John Burgess Band

Holyard Room (016215 329012)

Lazaro Gardony/George

Haslam

Jericho Tavern (0805 34502)

Mike Beck Trio

Alton (08055 6050)

Mornington Lockett

Iain Ballamy

Poole Arts Centre (0202 685222)

Totry Lee Trio

Djargo Bares Qtr

Mike Carr Trio

Sevenoaks Fmg & Backet

(073275 219)

Hard Lines (lunchtime)

(0762 754300)\*

livehouse concerts

Mike Beck

John Brown's Bodies

Aptex

Byther Smith (evening)

Southampton Corniche Club

(0703 615889)

Ken Popkowski

Tower Sire Concert Hall

(0703 617771)

Andrew Hall/Josham

Kuhn/Howard Riley/

Jason Rebello

University John Arlett Room

(0703 777624)

SMC Big Band

Full Monte

Spirit Level

Tonal Centre

Unit 5

St Andrews Younger Hall

(01354 72274)

Chuck Lyall Duo/Quartet

Stafford Arts Centre

(0780 61203)

Argüelles

Taunton Brewery

(0823 28244)

Sean Tracey Orchestra

Wakefield Spun Club

(0924 376900)

Dave Blackmore Band

Deck Monseay

Al Woods Band

Welton William Farr School

(0673 60227)

John Burgess Band

LONDON

Blackheath Concert Hall SE1

(081 463 0100)

Courtney Pine & The

Paradise Reggae Band

Bulls Head SE13

(081 876 5241)

Hard Lines

Jazz Cafe NW1

Miroslav & Alan Vissus

James Blood Ulmer

Blues Experience

Andy Sheppard Qtr

Lee Konitz Qtr

John Taylor/

Palle Danielson/

Jon Christensen

Unity

Nelson Mandela Party

Abdullah Ibrahim &

Ekyas

Cassandra Wilson Qtr

(rbc)

John Surman Qtr (rbc)

Purcell Rooms SE1

(071 928 3002)

Michael Garrett Trio

Ronnie Scott's Club W1

(071 430 0747)

Super Nova w/Flora

2 Pains

Arturo Sandoval

Tom Allen Centre E13

(081 255 7289)

Maggie Nicols/Lindsay

Cooper/Jules Doyle

Wilkesden Green Library

Centre NW10 (081 451 0294)\*

Opfly Robinson Sextet

ABDULLAH IBRAHIM *longa good now! from Africa to Canada's jazz Café this month. Photo by NICK WHITE*



A HIP and happy new year to you all from The Cat's overcrowded garret. It's either this or the new Jazz Cafe, anyway: the opening night party at Jon Dabner's palace had the faint atmosphere of 'building site' about it, but the venue has since settled into its stride and appears to be hosting nightly crowds. Getting in does, indeed, appear to be a problem for some: I hear that a certain Mr Van Morrison was turned away because his name wasn't down . . . No such problems for George Haslam in Argentina. The globe-trotting baritone player was the first British jazzman to play in Buenos Aires and his arrival merited 'Haslam arrives' headlines in the papers and even a slot on the national TV news! When did our media get this excited over any of the cats? . . . Still abroad: newly-opened is the Jazz Institute of Darmstadt. The city bought Joachim Ernst Berendt's archive some years ago and has now built up an impressive research centre including countless books, records and magazines, claiming to be Europe's largest public jazz archive. Visitors are, we assume, welcome. It's at Kasinostrasse 3, D-6100 Darmstadt, Germany (phone: 06151 13-2877) . . . Nice to see the return of The Swan in Hammersmith as a music venue (see News section), particularly as the capital has lost many of its free-er music venues in recent months. Jazz boom or no, improvising always struggles to find a home. But prepare to make your way to the Wire Club 2, soon to open as a regular home for improvisers and other heroes of the margins. . .

This month's Braxton snapper: three days of concerts are to be held in Washington this coming September to celebrate the great contrabass saxophonist's 25 years in showbiz. Book your tuxedo now . . . Charly have acquired the rights to the King catalogue and are planning a massive reissue programme from the King, Federal and Deluxe labels – expect 50 CDs in the first year . . . But that's nothing compared to the wealth of material which we can expect from Joel Dorn's new Night Records project, handled over here by Virgin. Dorn claims to have a staggering 250,000 hours of live tapes from the last three decades that he can draw material from (much of it jazz). Everything from Dr John tapes found in a rubbish bin to what's on the first batch of issues – reviewed this month . . . Sun Ra was taken ill with a stroke shortly before Christmas, but the man from Saturn was discharged from hospital and back in action in a matter of days . . . Interesting rumours that New York's Blue Note club is considering opening a sister (brother?) venue in London . . . Another musician takes to the easel: saxophonist Marion Brown is having some of his paintings reproduced in poster-sized editions. Contact J.B. Editions of 22 Bis, Rue Lédion, 75014 Paris (phone 33-1-4044-6738) for details of how to get them . . . Also upcoming from this office: the next batch of exclusive *Wire* musical releases. We're considering a switch from cassette to CD as our chosen format – but the limited-edition status will be a constant and prices will be kept as low as possible . . . See you in Europe . . .

THE BIG CAT



## What's

# WIRE

Launched in 1982, **Wire** is an independent monthly for anyone with a personal or professional interest in **creative contemporary music** in all its forms.

This means that **Wire** covers jazz, but with a view to the **vitality** of the present and the **excitement** of the future as well as an **informed awareness** of the past.

**Wire** covers **free improvisation**, the **avant-garde** and **contemporary composition**, but without the querulous incomprehension of the mainstream music press or the introverted self-importance of academic music criticism.

**Wire** covers **fusion**, **Latin**, **blues** and music from **global cultures**, but acknowledging them as vital and developing **artforms** rather than transitory fashion accessories.

**Wire** covers the most **progressive areas** of **rock**, **new age** and **ambient music** with a critical perspective which is **demanding**, **perceptive** and above all **incisive**.

Furthermore, as **Wire's** music is a **musician's** music, we also cover these areas from the **musician's** point of view, dealing with **practical** aspects of **creative music-making**.

And, because the music **deserves** it, **Wire** presents all these subjects with a near-legendary standard of **graphic excellence** unequalled anywhere in the music press.

**Wire** has a **unique** reputation as the source of **wit**, **wisdom** and **no-nonsense hard information** on the most **vital** areas of today's music. Throughout the Eighties **Wire** has provided an **essential** alternative to the increasingly homogeneous music and 'style' press. **Now**, we're looking to the Nineties.

And, as our **readers** will tell you, there's now no alternative to **Wire**.

To advertise in **Wire**, telephone **Roger Thomas** on **071 580 7522**, Fax **071 323 6905**.

## contemporary music

network

## CAPRICORN sounds from the steppes

These works by prominent contemporary Russian composers highlight the changing international political climate. The pieces performed are by classical composers of earlier in the century as well as by current composers who are gaining increasing recognition. The music of Alfred Schnittke was suppressed for years in the Soviet Union, but now receives widespread worldwide acclaim: several concert series have been devoted to his music, which is performed and admired by such major artists as Mstislav Rostropovich and Yury Bashmet, who premiered Schnittke's Viola Concerto at the BBC Proms. Sofia Gubaidulina's *Homage to T.S. Eliot* takes its text from Eliot's *Four Quartets*. It was awarded the Kozlovsky International Record Award in 1989.

**PROKOFIEV**  
Overture on Jewish Themes  
**SCHNITKE**  
String Trio  
**STRAVINSKY**  
Septet  
**GUBAIDULINA**  
*Homage to T.S. Eliot*

Leeds Hall Thursday 28th February 8.00pm Tel 0747 50761  
Queen Elizabeth Hall Friday 1st March 7.45pm Tel 071 928 8800  
The Green Hall, University of Nottingham Monday 4th March 7.00pm Tel 0602 468448 ext 2037  
Royal Northern College of Music Friday 8th March 7.30pm Tel 061 273 4594 / tickets and bookings 061 273 5534  
Middleton Hall University of Hull Sunday 16th March 7.45pm Tel 0462 26523  
Adrian Beale Hall Sunday 18th March 7.30pm Tel 021 236 5889  
Tanner Saxe Concert Hall Tuesday 12th March 8.00pm Tel 0703 677771  
Philharmonie Hall Friday 15th March 7.30pm Tel 031 709 8789

**SHREWSBURY**  
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**BIRMINGHAM**  
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**LIVERPOOL**

## WILLEM BREUKER KOLLEKTIEF

The ten piece Dutch band apply all instruments of steel and iron to original tunes as well as every musical genre imaginable, and stamp its irreverent personality on music by Weill, Gershwin and Ellington. The Kollektief 'never fails to electrify audiences: reducing them to helpless laughter and standing ovations' - *Wire*. The Willem Breuker Kollektief has recently appeared at the Glasgow, Bath, and North Sea Jazz Festivals, and performed an all-Wire programme at the 1990 Almeida Festival.

Queen Elizabeth Hall Thursday 14th March 7.45pm Tel 071 928 8800  
Tynes Club Friday 15th March 8.00pm Tel 0332 742466  
Haymarket Theatre Sunday 17th March 7.10pm Tel 0333 539797  
Royal Northern College of Music Wednesday 20th March 7.30pm Tel 061 273 4594 / tickets and bookings 061 273 5534  
Adrian Beale Hall Thursday 21st March 7.30pm Tel 021 236 5889  
Shelbourne Theatre Friday 22nd March 8.00pm Tel 0865 364056  
Theatre Royal Sunday 24th March 8.00pm Tel 0272 250259  
Rushton Theatre Monday 25th March 8.00pm Tel 0392 421111  
Wilde Theatre, South Hill Park Tuesday 26th March 8.00pm Tel 0344 484123

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## home bass ECM star and eminent bassist Eberhard

Weber tells Mike Fish there is a European jazz style. Photo by Andrew

Pothecary.

EBERHARD AND I are sitting on one of the toytown trains of the Docklands Light Railway. These vaguely futuristic, clanking engines remind me of the bubble cars in Woody Allen's *Sleeper*; the bassist, who used to be a professional film-maker himself, chuckles in agreement.

As the train snakes through the half-built metropolis, a moon city under the baleful giant that is Canary Wharf, Weber considers the European qualities of his music, in response to a question about his long-term collaboration with keyboard player Rainer Bruninghaus.

"What I like about his playing is that it is absolutely European. There is no fear of any jazz, so to speak. He can play that way, of course, but he's certainly a European musician and he plays in that style, not in the American style of accompanying one hand with the other.

"It's our tradition. It's the only thing we have against the Americans, for example. It wasn't allowed for many years – it always had to be jazz, bebop, everyone trying to copy the Americans. Suddenly, after all these years, the world opened its ears and said, ah, there's another way of playing.

"I think we need to take care to keep it and not lose it," he reflects, gazing at the river from our lofty situation. "That so-called world music, which is now very popular, I think it's tragic. We have enough world music, and it's called rock – you can hear that in Japan, Indonesia, anywhere. The music's individuality suffers. Synthesizers are the same everywhere. The same sounds. If there's a new sound, it's sampled and stolen. As long as you have your own identity, you should keep it."

INDIVIDUALITY, OF A quiet-spoken sort, colours most of Weber's conversation. He was born in Stuttgart 51 years ago, the son of a "not too successful" musician, and he



took up cello but found he wasn't terribly interested in classical music. Eberhard liked things such as Bill Haley's "See You Later Alligator". There was an unused bass hanging around the gymnasium of his school, and he tried his hand at that. It was a short step from there to playing jazz.

When he dipped for a friend in Wolfgang Dauner's group, the friend lost his job. He stayed with Dauner's group all through the 60s, never giving up his day job with a small film company, where he rose from production assistant to director on commercials and TV work. But after leaving Dauner, and working with Dave Pike and Volker Kriegl in the early 70s, he realised he had to make a go of it by himself – especially when the film company went bankrupt.

"I ruined all the bands I played with! I never played what they wanted. As soon as I got past rehearsing with other people, I just went ahead and played my own ideas, and sooner or later I found out they wanted their own music, not mine."

"Professionalism came late in my life. I started putting some ideas together, and just as I was thinking about approaching a record company, Manfred Eicher approached me."

The result was *The Colours Of Cello*, the 1973 album that stands as one of the classics of the early ECM years. Somewhat to the composer's amazement, the record collected a sheaf of international prizes, led to invitations to play with Gary Burton and Ralph Towner, and established Weber as a name and a sound that was entirely his own.

"I was playing an acoustic bass with electric pick-ups, but it didn't make sense to me, somehow. It was just an amplified thing, nothing with any acoustic qualities. So, I thought, why not just use a wooden board with strings on top? And I saw in an antique shop a bass that was just like that. It was in a terrible state. The neck was broken. I asked a bass-maker to fix it, and I added a fifth string. It sounded . . . well, not very good at first. But it worked out pretty well after a year or so."

Only Jaco Pastorius has extracted a more luxurious sound out of the bass than Weber; and while Pastorius kept mainly to his olive-oil fretless timbre, his European counterpart has stretched his sonic capabilities further. Using the bow, Weber can create orchestral sections by himself, the chorus attachment on his instrument layering cello and bass octaves into thick carpets of sound. Plucked notes sound like lugubrious whale-calls or cavernous booms. His solo performances make the most of what is actually a comparatively limited range of devices: not for him the ingenious freedoms of Rogers, Guy or Kowald.

What Weber prefers is using his sound as part of a composer's palette. He dislikes the open ends of free playing: "the percentage of throwaway music is far too high. Out of an hour of free jazz playing, you might get six or seven minutes of high quality music, and the rest is just searching. I'm interested in the result, and less interested in the process."

The results are the painstakingly-crafted albums which are a centrepiece in the ECM catalogue. Admirers probably stand by the early discs – *Cello*, *Yellow Fields*, *The Following Morning* –

as their favourites, and it does seem as though most of his especially memorable compositions are in those albums. There's something nostalgic about the beautiful *Yellow Fields*, for instance: the combination of Weber's bass at its most deep-throated with the swimming textures of Brunninghaus's Fender Rhodes was impressionistic in the most full-bodied way, with Charlie Mariano's sinuous improvisations curling over the top. Next to that, merely satisfactory records such as *Fluid Rustle* or *Chorus* sound perfunctory.

"When I listened to other people's records," he remembers, as the train trundles into the terminus at Island Gardens, suddenly back in old East London again, "I found that I only liked bits and pieces. But those bits and pieces I really liked. I might have only liked one chord, but I really loved that chord! So I came to the conclusion that when I came to compose, I'd only use chords and phrases that I really liked – and use them over and over."

RECENT YEARS have found him paring those structures down. Since dissolving the Colours group, he has worked as a sideman more than anything, his latest appearance being with the Jan Garbarek group, which ended a massive European tour of 56 dates in London in December. Besides that, he has taken the rare step of performing solo dates, where he's careful to explain all his moves to the audience, revealing himself as a peculiarly charming front-man.

"A bass solo always seems like a surprise. Even in bebop days, when the bassman would just go boom-boom-boom, it would always get the biggest applause of the night. But it's hard to sustain those kind of concerts, and hard to get promoters to book them."

Eberhard doesn't see himself as much of a technocrat. His playing equipment has changed little in the past 20 years. He spends a lot of our conversation quietly railing against the technologies which ask a drummer to carry around six different snare drums with them, just to get the sacred 'correct sound' for a particular context. Instead of hairline preparation for records, he finds himself swearing out the music with the dare only hours away. He is also rather partial to a round of applause. One of his favourite anecdotes concerns a Berlin Festival appearance early in his solo career, where a hostile audience had already booed off Herbie Hancock, Sean Kenton and Billy Eckstine. Weber played the gig with Brunninghaus, drummer Ralf Hubner and 12 cello players, performing a single 45-minute set. The crowd roared. Next day, the papers said "12 cellos won over (Hancock's) 12 tons of equipment".

As the train sets off with a jolt, back towards Tower Gateway and the City that may yet be part of a single Europe, he has a confession.

"I think what I would most like to have been was a conductor. I'm not sure I'd have been physically strong enough to direct 80 people who only want to kill you! But," he says, running a hand through his straw-coloured hair, "the process of it is probably my dream."

Another sort of conductor inspects our tickets.

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An occasional column by Francis Davis



Spike!

Is Mr Lee getting mo' worse?

IT'S A movie about a slick trumpeter so wrapped up in His Music that he overlooks What Really Matters until A Good Woman puts him on The Right Path.

*Mo' Better Blues*? Right. But also *A Man Called Adam*, a 1966 Sammy Davis Jr vehicle to which *Mo' Better* bears an embarrassing resemblance. In *Adam*, What Really Matters is The Movement, as personified by Cicely Tyson. In *Mo' Better*, which spreads its sanctimony even thicker, it's the Black Family, as represented by Joie Lee, whose maternal instincts are established by shots of her teaching elementary school before supplying Denzel Washington (Our Hero) with a son of his own. We can figure out that Joie's rival, Cyndia Williams, is all wrong for Denzel not because she's the traditional Bored Playgirl, but because she's a Careerist with Musical Ambitions of her own. Message aside, we're supposed to amuse ourselves for two hours by wondering which of his two women Washington is finally going to settle down with. Hint: only one of them is the auteur's sister.

Here in the US, Spike Lee's adherence to dated genre conventions was virtually ignored, because practically everybody who wrote about the movie was preoccupied with the question of whether Spike's depiction of the club owners Josh and Mo Flatbush — Shylocks for all seasons — was anti-semitic. (Anybody who had trouble answering that question would probably need help in deciding that his index finger was next to his thumb.) Spike and his party-liners, including Branford Marsalis, tried to brush off the accusations by pointing out that movies have been stereotyping ethnic minorities (blacks, in particular) since *The Birth Of A Nation*. So there.

To Lee's advantage, the fuss over Josh and Mo served the purpose of keeping alive as an official Topic of Conversation a movie already established as a box office dud. Even if Lee had managed to give us the most inside look at jazz ever put on screen (more or less what he promised when he dissed *Bird* and *'Round Midnight*), *Mo' Better Blues* was bound to strike most

audiences as anticlimactic following *Do The Right Thing* (predictions that a movie is going to spark summer rioting is the sort of explosive prepublicity that money can't buy).

Even so, I thought that everybody in the jazz community would still be talking about the picture as the year went on. Maybe the reason it didn't work out that way was that despite Spike's lineage, Bill Lee's score, and the unconvincing night-club *mus en scene*, jazz seemed somehow beside the point in *Mo' Better Blues*. On the all-important video front, it was business as usual, with the big push going not to any of the jazz tunes, but to Gangstar's rap about jazz and to Cyndia Williams's dreadful pop rendition of W C Handy's "Harlem Blues".

Meanwhile, I think that Spike is stretching himself a little thin (not just as producer/director/screenwriter/supporting actor but as political spokesman/sneaker pitchman/entrepreneur). If he doesn't recapture his stride in the forthcoming *Jungle Fever*, he better hold on to his Brooklyn movie memorabilia shop.

WHAT EVERYBODY in jazz *was* still talking about in the waning days of 1990 was the print media's infatuation with Neophobic Youth.

In May, *The New York Times Sunday Magazine* published a long piece by Tom Piazza extolling the virtues of a group of musicians ranging in age from the 19-year-old organist Joey De Francesco to the 26-year-old Marcus Roberts, all of whom had recently been signed to major labels. Piazza opened with a look at Roy Hargrove wowing his elders at Bradley's in Greenwich Village with his mastery on an unidentified Charlie Parker tune. "Ten years ago, you could have stepped into every jazz club between Bradley's and Yankee Stadium and not found any 'youngseers' playing this way," Piazza wrote. "For a long time, young musicians were taught to play a hybrid form that was jazz in name only, often heavily electronic, with large

continued on page 71

*. . . and get European with Olufsen!*



wire, the cats with a lead on the great danes.

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## Jan Garbarek Group

LONDON  
TOWN AND COUNTRY CLUB

THE PACKED, sweaty, noisy, dark and beery atmosphere of the Town & Country Club didn't seem the most propitious setting for Garbarek to recreate the ambience of his *I Took Up The Ropes* album; nonetheless he pulled it off triumphantly, and one of the most fascinating aspects of the evening was watching this pared-down quartet feeling their way towards a live equivalent of that golden, whisperingly seductive studio sound. I can't remember being at a gig where the emphasis fell so heavily on questions of dynamics and texture rather than individual musicianship.

They began with the album's 30-minute centre-piece, "Molde Canticle", dominated by its recurring folk-like theme and notable in its lighter sections for the unison statements of Garbarek and Eberhard Weber. Soprano and bass (right at the top of the register) blended into a voice that was at once delicate and authoritative. After that things got freer and Nana Vasconcelos in particular started to come into his own: it was often his choice of percussion which determined the entire character of a piece, and he did a valiant job of trying to distract us from the anchoring thud of some necessary but unimaginative drum programs.

Rainer Bruninghaus's key-boards proved the most problematic area. On synth he provided a reassuring backdrop of

chordal washes but as a lead instrument his piano seemed unfocused, based as it was on an admirably nimble and excitable approach which sounded simply misplaced in a context where the other musicians were working towards reflectiveness and tonal exploration. These latter qualities were especially evident in Weber's solo spots, where multi-tracking enabled him to weave patterns of elaborate counterpoint, and in Garbarek's own use of echo and reverb to produce amazing ensemble effects.

As for the material, Garbarek's writing continues to run a very flexible course: the title track from *I Took Up The Ropes*, which they played as a second encore, consists of only two chords set-swinging hypnotically over Vasconcelos's bustling Latin rhythms, with plenty of space for the tenor to soar and circle and dive. At the other end of the spectrum we have "Molde Canticle", with its tightly structured passages alternating with windows for improvisation, so that the whole piece achieves an accessible grandeur which might just turn it — if the response of this audience was anything to go by — into a new "Super's Ready" for the current generation of thirtysomething *Wire* readers.

JONATHAN COLE

## Alfred Schnittke Birthday Tribute

HUDDERSFIELD  
CONTEMPORARY MUSIC  
FESTIVAL

"NEW ROMANTICISM", "New Complexity", "New Tonality" — Schnittke's music disdains passing fashion and follows its own single-minded path. *Perestroika* gave the ears of Shostakovich a sudden popularity in the West; of these, Schnittke's music has the hallmarks of greatness. The

1990 Huddersfield Festival, with an Eastern European slant, celebrates Schnittke's 56th birthday with the UK premiere of his *Faust Cantata*. The purview of his other music confirms that here he has found his tragic theme.

That music is accessible but far from soft-centred. It has to be said it is not a barrel of laughs. Schooled in irony by the master Shostakovich, the composer's German-Jewish origins made him an alien in his native land, and homelessness his theme. Stark, bleak, often invoking terror, this is music for the frozen political landscape of post-war Eastern Europe, now thawing without (as Schnittke would agree) offering great hope for the future.

A piano recital by the formidable Viktoria Posnikova forms a fitting prelude. Her expression matches the tragic intensity of Schnittke's *Pavlo Sonata*, desolate and beautiful. Obsessive hammering in the upper register contrasts terrifyingly with the tundra landscape through which we later pass. The work cries out for a recording by this artist. At the very end of the Festival, violinist Alexander Balanescu, erstwhile collaborator with the Pet Shop Boys and John Surman, leaves behind his Quartet for Schnittke's elegiac "Shostakovich" prelude. The UK premiere of a 1958 *Sonata* by Schnittke's Polish contemporary Henryk Gorecki reveals another religious composer emerging from the communist shadowland.

The orchestral concert programmes Schnittke's *Ritual* and *Violin Concerto No 4* with the *Faust Cantata* — conductor Gennadi Rozhdestvensky. The first piece is a memorial to the victims of World War II. A painful slow ascent generates an awesome volume which can't be sustained, and the piece closes in eerie cinematic

bulbations, leaving perhaps a glimmer of hope or at least acceptance. The macabre *Violin Concerto* (soloist Gyorgy Pauk) has the witty stroke of a silent cadenza. The *Faust Cantata* is a preparation for Schnittke's first operatic project; a recent recording (reviewed *Wire* 81) forms part of the BIS label's Schnittke series. It must be the composer's most extraordinary achievement to date. The "Tango" conclusion, which brought the house down, so upset the Russian authorities that the planned first performance was banned. It is a compelling "negative Passion" of Faust's last hours.

In a birthday interview, Schnittke talks (via a translator) of his mysticism: "I have the impression music I write is not written by me but exists already outside". And of his alleged polystyrene "Now, the problem of style is not a question of being eclectic. Now, all styles are finding what it is that joins them together." He has been fortunate, he believes, to witness this happy day, since a series of strokes nearly killed him. Still frail, pale and grey, he shuffles slowly onstage after the concert to receive graciously a modest birthday cake. "I have been given," he has said, "the chance to live twice", and in this second life a molten fusion of styles has forged the paradox of new unity.

ANDY HAMILTON

## Paul Rogers Sextet

BRIGHTON  
CONCORDE JAZZ CLUB

ONE HATES to be caught repeating oneself (does one not?) but the team of Paul Rogers and Mark Sanders continues to demonstrate its power and skill in a variety of contexts, and the duo's presence in a band virtually guarantees an





*Jan-Nana (pt.1)*  
JAN GARBAREK and  
NANA  
VASCONCELOS photos  
by ANDREW  
POTHECARY.

evening of stimulating music.

The Concorde date was the last but one on a Now Time tour showcasing Rogers's Arts Council commission *Anglo American Sketches*, written for flute, three reeds (doubling, tripling and more), bass and drums. I had heard the band near the start of the tour when they played London's Purcell Room, and I was interested to find out what would develop between two performances of a work which mixed free improvisation with a substantial amount of written material.

The power of the Purcell Room performance made me especially intrigued as to how the band would react to the very different Brighton venue. The South Bank, and the Purcell Room in particular, acts oddly on jazz audiences. They can either be ultra-reserved, slightly intimidated by the formal environment, or else be embarrassingly intent on proving that they are not at all fazed by it. The Concorde holds about the same-size crowd as the Purcell Room in half the space, three-fifths of the comfort and three times the atmosphere, though that depends on the audience too.

The Concorde punters acknowledged good solos (of which there were many), created a (mostly) attentive but informal atmosphere, and yelled for more at the end. The Sextet couldn't conveniently provide more of the same in an encore-sized bite since the *Sketches* seemed to be much more of a composition than the facilitators for improvisations I had been prepared for. A comparison of the two gigs indicated more composer control than I expected, with solos developing consistently within each sketch and between each gig. No one went off at inappropriate tangents yet each soloist still managed to stamp their own character on their improvised contributions.

The balance at the Purcell Room had favoured Sanders, Rogers and Neil Metcalfe's flute. In Brighton the three sax-men (three men, two clarinets, eight saxes) got a better hearing (though Rogers himself was sometimes blotted out) and we could more easily assess the ensemble writing. The furious pace and raucous textures of several of the written passages sometimes concealed their intricacy and design. Rogers had provided strong templates, so that the *Sketches* sounded like a genuine suite, but succeeded in sparking wide-ranging individual offerings.

Paul Donmall was extremely impressive at both venues, but by the Concorde date John Ranganoff was playing more assertively and matched a fine Donmall solo on C-melody with a fiery tenor excursion. The third saxophonist was Simon Picard, who has also been consolidating his reputation in several contexts – the Affinity Orchestra, the London Jazz Composers' Orchestra – and who is wont to wrap up the most tempestuous piece with a coda of convincing lyricism.

Now the question on every lip is, who will follow through the Arts Council's commission and enable the *Sketches* to be recorded?

BARRY WITHERDEN

## The European Women's Orchestra

LONDON  
ST PANCRAS  
PARISH CHURCH

RADIO 4 may not want a *Woman's Hour* in 1991 but Radio 3 could usefully mature one. The first great composer in the Western tradition was a woman, but if Hildegard von Bingen is not exactly a household name the fate of her successors has been an obscure

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ity as deep and as dark is the pit of male prejudice itself.

The European Women's Orchestra hopes to celebrate women composers in much the same way as the Women's Press and Virago have celebrated women writers. But the EWO has already scored its first success simply by focusing attention on this neglected area of human creativity.

First formed – by composer/conductor/Lontano leader Odaline de la Martinez – for the Chard Festival Of Women In Music in the summer of last year, the EWO, now the UK's first fully professional women's orchestra, made its London debut last December as part of the capital's own 1990 Women In Music Festival. The programme was enterprising – 20th, 19th and 18th century pieces by (respectively) US, UK and French composers – and the Martinez baton elicited brisk, assured performances, with rhythmic currents particularly well articulated – as you might expect from a conductor who spent her childhood listening to Cuban Voodoo drums! (See *Wire* 60.)

Joan Towers's 1985 *Island Rhythms*, the most modern piece on the programme, also struck me as the least successful. A blaze of percussion-led colour, it was bright, loud but rather shapeless – or, at least, at only eight minutes long, over before I'd grasped what its shape was. An early (1890) piece by Dame Ethel Smyth provided more substance: her 30-minute *Serenade In D Major* drew heavily on Brahms, but showed real the composer's own sure hand in matters of dynamics, movement and orchestration, with some delightful

writing for woodwind and attractive pastoral episodes contrasting with energetic outer movements, notably an agitated climax that displayed plenty of oomp.

However, the highlight for me was the *Piano Concerto In D Major* written (and first performed) by the 17-year-old Amelie-Julie Candelle in 1784. If the first movement was a weak spot, piano and orchestra alternating in rather stilted fashion rather than engaging in fluent dialogue, the following *Andante* exuded real charm and the final *Rondo* danced along with a sparkling brio that was utterly captivating, soloist Alison Brewster finding a perfect balance between the music's elegance and its energy. Candelle wrote many other works, including a comic opera *Catherine, Ou La Belle Fermiere* (1792), which apparently was a great hit in Paris in the 1790s. I only hope the EWO – or someone, anyone – will consider reviving it for the 1990s. And if you're wondering what an 18th century composer is doing in *Wire*, well, music by women, from any period, is still so little heard that it's all *new music* to me.

GRAHAM LOCK

## Ahmad Jamal

LONDON  
JAZZ CAFE

THE NEW Jazz Cafe still carries a banner outside saying "The building site is now open". By the time of Jamal's residency in Week Two, it certainly looked a lot more welcoming than on opening night.

The historical influence of the pianist's music (on Miles's 1950s and 60s rhythm-sections and on piano trios everywhere) is easily overlooked, but its surface characteristics are fairly obvious. The catchy rhythmic



*Music at her fingertips* ODALINE DE LA MARTINEZ, conducts the  
EUROPEAN WOMEN'S ORCHESTRA  
*Photos by* ANDREW POTHECARY

figures, the use of space and the short bursts of dazzling technique are expert enough to pull in a lot of casual listeners. Even to seduce those who can perceive his limitations, as one such victim admitted while listening to him.

But ultimately it is the historical aspects which are more interesting than the ongoing reality. Use of space here often means the discreet distortion of a standard melody by speeding or slowing its phrases, and then catching up suddenly; which is expressive when done by Miles (or Billie Holiday) whereas Ahmad seems merely mannered. Similarly the unleashing of tricky right-hand runs or crashing series of octaves becomes exquisitely boring, simply because it is always reined in before the idea needs to be developed or to be followed by another idea.

Jamal's accompanists sounded anonymous, and their names appropriately hard to hear (James Conick and drummer Dave Bowler?). They are not there, however, to create but to furnish a groove or other backdrop for the pianist's titillating theatricality. In that respect Jamal could be said to be the godfather of a lot of fusion and post-fusion, and the way it arouses expectations which it fails to satisfy. I hope and trust this won't be true of the ambitious new venue in Camden Town, but I thank the Jazz Cafe for this particular history lesson.

BRIAN PRIESTLEY

## International Festival Musique Actuelle

VICTORIAVILLE  
CANADA

THE OVERALL success of this year's FIMAV — as usual — is the result of broad-minded, derring-do program-

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ming undegraded by consistent and obtrusive presentation. The festival calls attention to the music without making a spectacle of itself. In fact, the thoughtful way the concerts are scheduled means that the main event doesn't drown out the minor event. At Victoriaville, it's just music — *musique juste*.

Such an approach optimises the possibility of surprises, and topping the list of this year's was *Slan*. A first set featured Ted Epstein on drums, Elliot Sharp on guitars and John Zorn on alto and vocals. Thus configured, they ground through a series of shorthand hardcore improvisations, chunks of Ornette floating up and sucked back into the spittle-soaked whirlpool. Zorn hollered and snorted more than he blew, but then again, what stood between his mouth and a sound never used to be a whole saxophone anyway, so why insist on anything at all? The point is that he's a brilliant improviser, a point I wouldn't venture for Sharp. Here again the *Slan* context is perfect: Sharp's forte is rock guitar, and I doubt that he's ever been in better form in a better forum.

Reeved-up and truly enjoyable as the first set was, it hardly served to prepare us for the bloody-murder vocalizing of second set guest Yamatsuka Eye, from the Japanese group Boredoms. Drawing from a seemingly unlimited stock of extended (and probably dangerous) screaming, humming, retching, throat-seizing vocal techniques, Eye blow-torched staid notions of "singing", and a resulting all-voice duet between Zorn and Eye proved exquisitely, though

almost unbearably, tense.

In quite a different, more text-bound form of extremism, Ted Milton's trio *Blurt* socked out urgent agit-riff-poems offset by Milton's saxophone sluice, through which he occasionally sent a stream of notes bobbing about the beat. Both in use of language and in attitude, the point of reference for *Blurt* is not rock, but dada. Each groove had a seductive, yet confrontational edge about it: the sociability of being called out to fight. Less outrightly aggressive, yet fully within a programme of creatively reconsidering rock, *Carlew* took to the task by complicating the steady beat and laying snaky sax/cello lines on top. Bassist Ann Rupel and drummer Pippin Barnett might well be the new-music Meters, and guitarist Davey Williams shuttled back and forth between their snap-tight rhythm tap and the extended improvisations of cellist Tom Cora and saxophonist George Cartwright.

As for no-net improvising, two groups successfully navigated the high wire this year, with nail-biting results. The *Recedents* (Loi Coxhill, Roger Turner and Mike Cooper) overcame the complete breakdown of Coxhill's low-tech electronics by turning into a reluctant free-jazz trio fronted by his curvy curved soprano. Turner and Cooper scrupulously avoided Coxhill's earnest pleas to war, after it starts, anything goes, nothing can stop us now. The trio never fully gave in to a conventional free-blow, though. Turner swayed his way through an arco styrofoam solo and otherwise brilliantly dismantled the distinction between trap-kit and floor percussion, while Cooper strummed up an elegant blue Hawaiian on tabled lap-steel.

Equally theatrical and hilying was *Slawerhaus*, a quartet featuring peripatetic violinist Jon Rose, and Ger-

many's (all-together now) Conrad Bauer on trombone, Dietmar Diesner on reeds and Peter Hollinger on drums and metal percussion. Together they made a massive, menacing racket, full of juicy details and bunk around a rock thwack.

Groups drawing from a more strictly "jazz"-derived palette were in full effect this year as well. Marilyn Crispell led a fantastic quintet through some of her own compositions, which were as strong and impassioned as her playing always is. The final piece, scored for two horns (Oliver Lake and Peter Buettner), gracefully moved between blocks of open sections and choral reed arrangements in an almost tectonic way. None of the usual comparisons do Crispell justice, and this concert proved it — she has her own approach to the keys and a personal writing style, both of which make her one of the major forces to be grappled with (and enjoyed) today.

Likewise, Henry Threadgill . . . and has he been composing up a storm for his new group, *Very, Very Circus*. Written for two tubas, trombone, alto, drums and two electric guitars, the new works are among his finest, bogging in their ability to take such unwieldy instrumentation and not only get it off the ground, but make it weightless. Basically, this group sounds more or less like the Setetes, still emphasising short, integrated solos and thickly-textured compositions, and the pieces have the Threadgill bounce, a slightly tipsy motion imbued with conviction and no lack of funky forward propulsion. Not to mention the leader's masterful reedwork, Marcus Rojas blew a ton of tuba, guest Jerome Harris played marvelously Dolphyish guitar and trombonist Curtis Fowlkes raised my brow, merrily meeting the challenge of being

more than just a jazz passion-gel.

JOHN CORBETT

## Gary Todd/ Roger Turner

LEEDS  
TERMITE CLUB

WHEN THESE TWO played at Outside In, compere Lol Coxhill explained Gary Todd's ten-year absence from the scene with "he got pissed off". Then he added, "Roger Turner's been pissed off for ten years too, but he kept playing." Things are no better for improvisers than they were ten years ago, but his return is more than welcome.

Gary Todd constructs his tenor line out of knotted jazz licks, but rearranged into a personal hic-a-bic that makes every moment open to dialogue. He does not fly off into individual rhapsody, instead punching and ducking to Turner's every smash and roll.

Roger Turner has been known to disperse his kit over the floor, crouching down to rattle the most eloquent plastic bags in history with Todd he says behind his drums, but achieves such a variety of sounds that it is Todd's persistence that becomes the backbone. A rainbow of timbre, but not an Oxley avalanche: Todd doesn't have to bludgeon to find the spaces to play in (not that the bludgeons of Breitzmann and Wilkinson are a bad thing, of course).

The second set was even better, starting with a stop-go rhythm that resembled the checkpoints a sophisticated relational database makes with its backup tape (*computer literacy, we got it! - Ed*). A lovely tapering squawk from Todd, all Webster/Shepp soul, brings out his dazzling clickery from Turner (he's drawing his stick across an enormous spring).

Roll and stop, the Turner method: wooden clappers, metal chain, then finish it with a side-cymbal pitter-pat. Little bebop tail figures from Todd, his left-hand fingers doing an extraordinary flashdance.

They finish with zen-time logic, utterly surprising, the piece receding into the memory like a shiny, absolutely crafted sculpture whose shape was never dreamed before. Wow!

BEN WATSON

## Various Artists

HUDDERSFIELD  
CONTEMPORARY MUSIC  
FESTIVAL

SUBTITLED "THE Curtain Rises", this year's Huddersfield Festival was a celebration of the overthrow of oppressive regimes throughout Eastern Europe, the lifting of the iron curtain (portrayed in publicity and programme as skeins of barbed wire). Stalin suppressed the futurism that flourished during the years of revolution and workers' power. His Socialist Realism meant academic painting and academic symphonic music. Now, Glasnost means that, instead of being persecuted, Alfred Schnittke is a hero.

The reviewers in the British press were ecstatic: at last here was contemporary music with a "human" face – violin concerti, symphonies, massed choirs. Schnittke's polystyleism – a fancy word for 19th century musical forms sprinkled with "modernist" effects, mainly out of Ligeti – is seen as a gift to Western post-modernism.

However, political isolation from the social and artistic movements of the 60s in the West makes this pre-modern rather than post. Schnittke's musical "subversion" is harmless compared to the political questions raised by Hans Wer-

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ner Henze or Luciano Berio: the references to "other" styles cramped and academic. It is as if Black Nationalist jazz, avant-garde rock, free improvisation and Darmstadt use of Oriental percussion and electronics had never happened.

It is hard to deny the power of Schnittke's *Faust*, low organ chords shake the Huddersfield Town Hall floor, a full orchestra crashes through minor chords, Fiona Kim's demonic mezzo-soprano amplified over the top, but to say, like Graham Lock (*Wre 81*) that this is "brutal, stomach-churning, electrifying", when most splatter movie soundtracks manage this and more, is misguided.

In an admirable attempt to cater for listeners rather than fetishists of method, free improvisation from Russia was also part of the programme. Leo Fegin made a fighting speech about its importance, but maybe his exaggerations do the music a disservice. Slava Ganelin seemed lost without his usual trio, his famous "structures" undynamic and inert (he had a lovely jazz band accompanying the heartbeat) and his percussion-playing mediocre.

Valentina Ponomareva (vocals) and Natalia Pschentchikova (flute) seemed to be doing 60s "happenings" – artless and crucifixingly boring.

Orchestron from Volgograd showed that improvisation can intrigue – a powerful, slow set reminiscent of AMM in an expansive, painterly mood or a Butch Morris weirdscape. A pity that the "Curtain Rises" theme excluded the improvisers whose presentation back-to-back with scored works could really break down barriers.

The Ensemble Archæus come from Bucharest, showing that even Ceausescu could not exterminate musical curiosity: since 1985 founder Liviu Dan-cușanu has been attending the Darmstadt composition school. Costin Mîrișanu, now an acolyte of Boulez's IRCAM in Paris, showed in *Distanza Zero* a gripping control of pace and an acute sensitivity to percussion sounds.

Stefan Niculescu's *Sinonime 1*, see-sawing melancholia bursting up into Messianic staccos and modernist percussion, showed that Darmstadt abstraction has infinitely more respect for tradition than the dumb quotes of postmodernism: it charts the power of romanticism, interrogates the mechanics. Both pieces could usefully be compared to the work of improvisers Steve Noble and Tony Oxley.

Elsewhere John Cage, Toru Takemitsu and Jonathan Harvey helped clear the retromoke. The most exciting discovery at Huddersfield this year was Hanna Kulenty, born in Białystok in Poland in 1961. Her *String Quartet No 2*, premiered by the Balanescu Quartet, was wisely reshuffled to the end of the concert: sizzling through Gavin Bryars's increasingly less surreal and more tiresome music would have been unbearable after this juggernaut had passed through.

According to Pinski Zoo's Jan Kopinski, Warsaw is awash with *glissandi*, but Kulenty's use of them is no gimmick: Scelsi-like bow-on-string grating and a stunningly steered violence took us through a post-tonal world of urban blitz and sirens, as if the pressure on the materials were squeezing out new colours. The structure was almost tangible in its vividness and verve. Bravo Balanescu! Bravo Kulenty!

BEN WATSON



## monsieur cool hand

*Gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt was Europe's first jazz master.*

*bat. argues Martin Garryford.*

*the secret of his success was – he wanted to be an American!*

DJANGO REINHARDT was the first really significant jazz performer Europe produced, and still, nearly 40 years after his death, perhaps the most important. He played with the best Americans of his generation – Hawkins, Ellington, Benny Carter, Rex Stewart, Dicky Wells – not as a more-or-less good imitator, but as a complete equal. His music was obviously jazz, it fitted in perfectly with the conventions of Swing, but sounded, well . . . French.

He had fantastic rhythmic strength. On the saxophone quartet recordings with Hawkins and Carter from 1937 – "Honeysuckle Rose", "Crazy Rhythm" – he just about *is* the rhythm section. Piano, bass and drums are present, but it is Django you hear, and Django, really, who single-handedly carries all four horns. He was an astonishing accompanist. There was a sort of euphoric bounce in his playing that is as powerful in its way as, say, Blakey's drive or the Basie Band's swing. His sound comes through on those old records with the power and punch of a saxophone or trumpet. And this is all the more remarkable since for most of his career his instrument was the unamplified guitar, and he was playing it two fingers short on his left hand.

Most other European jazz of the day sounds clumping; at best it's competent. But Django's solos have the same imaginative distinction, the sense of taking a melodic line for a walk, that you get in the greatest Swing soloists. All those records American musicians made with Reinhardt in Paris before the war are much better than you might expect from off-the-cuff dates in a foreign capital. The best of them – the Carter/Hawkins, the Wells session, the one with Rex Stewart and Barney Bigard – are among the finest things in Swing jazz. They have a bubbling, carefree quality which may have had as much to do with Django's personality as it did with his

playing. His work with Dicky Wells on "Hangin' Around Boudon" and "Japanese Sandman" is as good as that of Wells himself – and in the 30s Wells was a player in the class of Roy Eldridge, Pee Wee Russell or Lester Young.

DJANGO WAS one of those individuals who create an era all on their own. He was unreliable, he could be difficult, in some ways he was very silly, but everybody who knew him put up with all that. Most of them proudly recounted Django anecdotes for the rest of their lives. No one, however, seems to have been able to explain just what it was that made him so special; and that in a way is just as puzzling as the question of how an illiterate Parisian Gypsy turned himself into one of the most important players in jazz before he had actually heard any of the stuff. Reinhardt was more than a great musician: he was a mystery.

He was born on 23 January, 1910 in Charleroi, Belgium. By the time he was ten, he, his mother, Negros, and his younger brother Joseph, were living in a caravan parked on a bit of muddy wasteland in the outskirts of Paris. At the age of 12 he was given a guitar by a neighbour, and he quickly taught himself by watching local musicians. He played all day, and didn't part company with the instrument even when he was asleep. By his mid-teens he was already a sensation in the cabarets and clubs of the Parisian periphery. Exactly what he was playing, however, is not quite clear. Presumably he had started off with some sort of 'gypsy guitar' style: later on he was certainly capable of turning in a competent flamenco-ish performance like "Echoes Of Spain". But that side of Django's music strikes me as the least interesting – it comes out on all the slow solo performances – "Improvisation", "Parfum", "Improvisation No 3, parts 1 & 2". He didn't really become



*'Foxygipsykin' good'* DJANGO REINHARDT in New York 1948. Photo by WILLIAM GOTTLIEB.  
from the book *Jazz Giants* (Columbus Books). Reproduced by kind permission of W. H. Allen



himself until he shifted up a gear and went into tempo.

His first professional experience was with little accordion bands playing at dances, and playing, presumably, the sort of French café music one associates with the words 'bal musette'. Certainly, his music always retained a strong flavour of that baguette-and-onion-soup idiom – his compositions 'Manoir De Mes Reves', 'Douce Ambiance' and 'Tears' are saturated with it. But even at the beginning he stood out because of his unorthodox love of American pop tunes – 'Dinah', 'The Sheikh Of Araby', the kind of thing that was just about to become the staple of jazz improvisation.

Then came two fateful accidents. First there was the infamous caravan fire which left him with a badly scorched right side, and the ring finger and little finger of his left hand twisted and useless. It was very sad – people said – only 18, so talented, and he would never play again. But within two years he was back, and better than ever, his injury having forced him to re-invent guitar technique – he seems to have played octaves, for example, Wes Montgomery-style with the pad of his palm – and to adopt a more forceful, single-noted style.

Next, while bumming around Toulon in 1931, he was introduced to jazz for the first time by a friendly fan. The striking thing about this, apparently, was that Reinhardt didn't just take to the music, he immediately *reigned it* as his own. As he listened to Armstrong until the early hours, he becke down and sobbed, 'My brother, my brother'.

IN 1934 the Quintet Of The Hot Club De France was formed with Stephane Grappelli on violin, and Joseph Reinhardt on rhythm guitar. Django remains best known for his work with that group, which became a music hall attraction, but actually the most successful records are mainly those with the visiting Americans. Even the competent but cautious Grappelli was not really Reinhardt's equal, and the others could be downright bad. As Grappelli recalled, 'We played together, just the two of us, very often because the rest of the musicians were incapable of following us. Django really suffered from that. We had a lot of trouble finding adequate bassists, for example. He couldn't stand wrong notes. They would traumatize him. He considered them a personal insult.'

The late 30s were a prolonged party, a bohemian golden age when Django only had to play his guitar to be showered with francs, and if he didn't feel like turning up at the gig he didn't. And he seems to have wandered through the Second World War with the same insouciance. At the outbreak of hostilities he was in London, playing with Grappelli and the Hot Club De France. 'It's war,' Django said to Grappelli as the first siren went, and took off for Paris. For the next few years he carried on much as usual, earning huge sums of money, losing them again making foolish bets on billiards, irritating his sidemen, maddening promoters, playing superb music.

There was, however, a grim background to the nightclubbing. As a Gypsy, Django was a candidate for a concentration camp; which is probably where he would have ended up if he

hadn't been so famous. In 1943 he decided to escape to Switzerland; and consequently moved to Thon-les-Bains near the Swiss border, where he held nightly jam sessions in a restaurant to a audience of locals, Gypsies, German soldiers, spies, plus the occasional RAF parachutist. Unsurprisingly, he was caught when he finally made his bid, but the German officer who interrogated him turned out to be a fan. 'Reinhardt, old chap,' he enquired, 'what are you doing here?' and let him off with a caution.

WHAT WAS the basis of Reinhardt's affinity for jazz? Was it, as Albert McCarthy argued (*Jazz On Record*, 1968), an accident, a chance affinity between Gypsy music and jazz? No doubt there is some truth in that. Gypsy guitar, as a strongly rhythmic, improvised music, has a natural affinity to jazz. And it was also an ingredient in the Hispanic folk music which was part of the original jazz-mix anyway. But Django was a very unusual Gypsy guitarist before he heard any jazz; he was a self-taught musician with an individual technique and the arrogance and talent to do everything his own way round, just like, say, Charlie Parker, or Lester Young. Furthermore, he wanted to play American songs.

My guess is that part of explanation of the enigma of Django is that he was a man with a dream. He thought of himself as a star, but not just any star, an *American* star. Asked how much money he wanted to tour the USA, he immediately replied, 'How much does Gary Cooper get?'. Stephane Grappelli remembers that when Reinhardt went to see a George Raft movie, he would come out walking like Raft. Perhaps, like many Europeans of his generation, he had a film-fed fantasy about American freedom and glamour, and that was what made him want to play those Tin Pan Alley standards on his guitar. The combination – his talent, Gypsy music, American pop – turned out to be perfect.

Predictably, when he finally reached America after the war, it was a dreadful disappointment. He alienated the critics by turning up very late for a concert with Ellington, hated the place and ended up hanging around under a lamp-post in Times Square because it reminded him of Paris. That tour was the beginning of the end for Reinhardt.

Django's inbred Gypsy contempt for the whole straight world of accurate time-keeping and respect for money exactly mirrored the hipster approach of a Parker or a Young. Translated into musical terms, of course, that determination to do it *bu* way came out as radical originality.

Reinhardt didn't drink inordinately or take drugs, but he was a compulsive gambler who would lose hundreds of thousands of francs in a night. He just didn't seem to care about money. His gambling also suggests that he continually wanted to check his luck – the fate that carried him from near destitution to stardom in a year or two – to see if it was still there. And it was absence of luck, not *touletre*, impracticality or the Nazis, that did him in. He began to complain of its disappearance in the early 50s, then developed a pain in the head and died, of a stroke, on 15 May 1953. He was 43. ■





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# baton rouge

Composer/conductor Pierre

Boulez is Europe's most radical advocate of 12-tone music. Ben Watson

meets the man who says the serial will run and run. Photo by Neil Drabble.

"I THINK that music should be collective hysteria and enchantment, violently modern," declared Pierre Boulez in 1966. Unlike too many radicals of that era he has not reneged on that promise. His insistence on the possibilities of score-player-listener has expanded the vocabulary of music, regardless of genre. To watch Boulez conduct Edgard Varese or Olivier Messiaen or, best of all, one of his own masterpieces, such as *Le Marteau Sans Maître* (1955), *Plu Selon Plu* (1962), *Eclat/Multiples* (1965) or *Repons* (1981) is to observe someone whose physical presence is dedicated to realizing sounds that have never before been brought forth. His arm shoots out and a cascade of dizzyingly varied percussion results, as if a musical Jackson Pollock is throwing paint across the auditorium.

Starting from strict adherence to 12-tone composition — *First Piano Sonata* — Boulez developed a freer style by writing pieces of music around texts. The instrumentation of *Le Marteau Sans Maître* was revolutionary, and very influential: contralto singer, flute, xyloimba, vibraphone, percussion, guitar and viola (Steve Lacy, for example, was listening).

Subsequent orchestration enriched this dramatic use of contrasting sounds: a concentration on *timbre* that both links Boulez to the French tradition of Debussy and shows that there is more to the impressionist than diaphanous veils. Works are often composed "in a spiral" — Boulez rejects the term "unfinished" — to include later revisions.

Some critics see a marked contrast before and after 1952. Today his music seems so sonorous, rich and entertaining that it is difficult to realize that he was once branded as the most severe cerebral spoilsport of all time. As with Cecil Taylor, the

early discipline gives him the tools to dig out the sonic treasures and pour them before us.

Like pop stars, conductors look larger than life in action, and it is surprising to find that he is quite a small man, spry and birdlike. He wears his 65 years well, and pays an almost alarming amount of attention to what you say: utterly on the ball. His English is fluent, though he is not at all afraid of substituting a likely-sounding French word if the English one escapes him.

In his autobiography Frank Zappa gets him just right: "He is as serious as cancer, but he can be funny too. He reminds me a little of the character Herbert Lom plays in the Pink Panther movies, that nervous quality — as if he might, given the proper excuse, start laughing uncontrollably" (*The Real Frank Zappa Book*, p195).

BOULEZ WAS born in Montbrison, in the Loire valley, in 1925 and grew up in St Etienne, where he sang in the Catholic school choir. He does not have very fond memories of provincial isolation.

"I was born and brought up in a very small town — 7000 before the war, in 1933 — and in these small towns there was absolutely no musical life whatsoever, and the radio was a very rare thing still. St Etienne was a big industrial city but there was absolutely no cultural life of any kind, musically speaking."

Boulez had a gift for mathematics and went to Lyons to study. Up until then, the only music he knew was what he had played himself on the piano — Bach and Beethoven. At the age



of 17 he heard an orchestra for the first time. In 1942 he moved to Paris and, against his father's wishes, decided to study music rather than engineering, attending Messiaen's harmony class.

French nationalism had castigated atonality as a German invention (whereas the Nazis castigated it as Jewish). Boulez and his allies were insistent that national antagonisms were a thing of the past: they wanted music to progress, and actively heckled concerts they disapproved of, including neo-classical works by the "grandmaster", Igor Stravinsky (now he will include important works by Stravinsky in his programmes that demonstrate what is living in the composer). Meanwhile, Boulez had lessons from Schoenberg's pupil René Leibowitz in 12-tone composition.

This marked the beginning of an estrangement from his native country that was only really healed in 1974, when he was invited to direct the *Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique* (IRCAM), which has sound laboratories beneath the Pompidou Centre in Paris.

"Provincialism can come either from a will to be isolated and to be only representative of one culture, or through political barriers, as we have seen with the Eastern countries. They were blocked and of course they did not participate."

Boulez believes in a cosmopolitan, internationalist modernism that actively learns from non-Western sources. In 1945, long before the marketing of world music, he was listening to the Balinese gamelan – on 78s! Like the Cubists' use of African masks, this was not an "alternative" to the Western tradition, but a logical extension of artistic concerns. Early 20th century modernism – Joyce, Dada, Varese – was an assault on representation, communication via acknowledged tokens. Art would no longer need to represent the hopes of religion, because humanity was constructing its own reality (the promise of the Russian revolution). Pierre Boulez likewise has a philosophical objection to conventional notation, which dissolves the concrete into a universal scheme. "The whole Western musical vocabulary has tended towards an abstract conception of intervals and of pitch independent of the instrument concerned. Thus sound has become a material independent of its own existence." (*Orientations* p156).

In our talk he expanded on this idea: "You don't lose the substance, really, of a symphony by Mozart or by Beethoven if you play it in piano four hands – you have the main things. Of course, with the instruments you have a richness which adds to that, but does not add to the intrinsic value. But now – and that's already begun in Schoenberg, with, for instance, *Opus 16* which is called *Farben*. If you reduce that to the piano, you take quite a lot out of it: you deteriorate the piece. Not only do you take something away, but you take something essential away from it. The mixture of rhythm and timbre is with the pitch and forms an amalgam which is absolutely unique."

BOULEZ WAS interested in the way that Oriental music works by specifying music for particular instruments: notes are not conceived as abstractions. He is echoing Edgard Varese:

"The role of colour or timbre would be completely changed from being incidental, anecdotal, sensual or picturesque; it would become an agent of delineation." (*The Liberation Of Sound*.)

This attention to sound opens up a dialogue with non-European music. It also raises all kinds of issues within the institutions of classical music. Boulez recounts how he could not conduct a score by Holst because he did not yet know what some of his innovative symbols signified.

One argument – congenial to a *Wire* perspective – is that recording technology has allowed the historical development of the sound of individual musicians. Without records it is inconceivable that anyone could talk about Hawkins, Ayler and Murray as links in a chain: it would all be a matter of hearsay (or believing Jack Cooke). Derek Bailey argues that this makes composition as such obsolete, since composers like himself can "realize" their work instantly.

However, this ignores the huge contribution 12-tone technique and timbral compositional science have made to the vocabulary. Academic serial music may be a matter of dots on paper that have no perceptual impact (what academic music is not), but in the hands of Boulez the mathematical rigours of total serialization (not only do you not repeat the notes in the row, but rhythm and timbre may be set into non-repeatable series too: this is the source of Boulez's percussive dazzlement) produced new sonic worlds that have inspired improvisers everywhere, from Ken Hyder to Bailey himself.

Boulez tells aspiring conductors to *listen* to the sound decay before they re-introduce the music: he is intensely interested in particular sounds at a particular time. It is the bores who want Tchaikovsky again who raise the spectre of composers who are "all theory" (the equivalent of pop critics who call jazz musicians "self-indulgent"). In fact, Boulez has harsh criticisms of academic analysis of scores that ignore the listener's experience.

I first came across Pierre Boulez's name on a record of Frank Zappa's – sandwiched between those of Charles Mingus and Anton Webern on a list of "influences" on 1966's *Frank Out*. It is obvious from comparing their music that Zappa has listened hard to Boulez. He talks about wanting to shout "Sit down, assholes, this is one of the *real* guys!" when a walk-out started because Boulez had got through conducting the Stravinsky and Debussy and had started one of his own pieces.

I asked Boulez what he made of the scores he conducted on Zappa's *Perfect Stranger* album. "I found a kind of vitality . . . it was very good for our musicians to do that. They were not accustomed at all to it, and that was good – to *work* on it."

Boulez is referring to the Ensemble Intercontemporain (if Boulez were black and American, it would be called his "band") and the orchestra question in general. He is appreciative of the commitment made to music by jazz musicians in comparison to orchestral ones.

"I think in jazz they are forced to be more inventive individually, because they don't have the burden of repertoire

continued on page 71



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**A STATEMENT RE: THE VAO**

"Painting is seen, or read, when its intensity forces us to participate in the illusion and in a dialogue with a world where the beautiful and the ugly, the common and absurd are indivisible – a world in which history, fantasy and reality, dream and memory are inseparable..." Terry Conway was speaking of his own aesthetic of painting in this statement, but if we substitute "music" for "painting" it serves as well to highlight the confrontational immediacy of Mathias Rüegg's compositions.

Two often, jazz composition rests as a "quest of recognition, revisiting familiar territory or bowdlerizing traits that are in the common repertoire. Ruggs rebels against convention, he is both a satirist, unflinching the inflated propositions of the past, and visionary, suggesting new possibilities. Two of his hat ART productions – **From No Time to Rag Time** (that ART CD 60\*\*) and **The Minimalism of Erik Satie** (that ART CD 6024) – are specific attempts to undermine our complaisant responses to familiar material. But scattered throughout the other three collections – **Concerto Piccolo** (that ART CD 6038); **Suite For The Green Eighties** (that ART CD 6054); and **Perpetuum Mobile** (that ART CD 60\*\*) – are pieces which prove insidious to our understanding of, on the surface, jazz and, deeper, community.

As leader of the Vienna Art Orchestra, Rugg's writing defines the ensemble's intent; the members of the VAO in turn give body and breath to his conceptions. His scores, expansive and exhilarating, exult in a rainbow's complexity ... of color, and transparency ... of reference, and juxtaposition ... of form, and freedom. The musicians find shifting contexts for their individual offerings, and are challenged no less than is the listener. This is the nature of confrontation, and the lovely illogic of music, where such new combinations of sounds suggest new attitudes, new fantasies, new realities.

– Art Lange  
May 1990

## \*\* CD-RELEASES IN PREPARATION

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an editor's idea

THIS ISSUE commences not only with the **British International Jazz Awards** but also with the 25th year of **MIDEM**, the international music market. **Wire** is going to be present throughout, shaking hands and making connections and helping to run up the pennant for British jazz in Europe. So we've chosen this issue to spotlight some of the trends and directions in the music as it exists in Europe today.

I've written elsewhere in this **Wire** about the purely musical currents of jazz in Europe. The logistical aspects – of marketing the music, reaching audiences, distributing records, finding and sustaining venues and all the paraphernalia that goes with presenting jazz – is scarcely less important. But the greatest barrier to overcome might be our own reluctance to treat European jazz with the necessary **enthusiasm and respect**.

It's a disgrace that there's so little give and take between Europe's jazz communities and our own. If it's been gratifying to see, say, Louis Slavis over here in the past 12 months, it's absurd that I have people writing to me and saying that they can't find his records anywhere. One can understand the reluctance of promoters to invite such musicians as the Splasc(h) roster or anyone from the Scandinavian jazz community when such gigs would create only a trickle of **interest**. But why should such xenophobic tastes prevail, when many average American musicians can find gigs and audiences in the UK?

**Never mind the accents.** The door to Europe must be opened now. Let this be the year of European jazz.

It's with great regret that I have to report two more departures from the **Wire** team. **Lucy Ward**, whose skills in designing the magazine have brought us the **highest honours** in the last two years, has left to travel the planet, mostly on skis. Lucy's contribution to the magazine can hardly be overestimated. In often near-impossible circumstances, she created great covers and layouts for issue after issue, her innovative ideas ensured that **Wire** was held in great esteem in design circles and other areas where jazz magazines would normally fear to tread. Lucy's **unquenchable good humour**, dulcet voice ("Waahhggghh!! Graham! Turn off that terrible jazz music!") and legion of admirers have passed into memory. But we wish her well. Stepping into her size-fives is Brooke Auchincloss-Foreman, who will carry on with the walpel and the paste.

We have also said goodbye to **Charlotte Delaforce**, who served us faithfully in half-a-dozen different capacities in the office and has gone to greater **fortune**. We wish her well, as well.

**Finally:** I write this as final preparations for the **Jazz Awards** go ahead. We expect a remarkable evening. Full results and report in the next issue.

R D COOK

Editor

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Sue Steward looks back at Latin 1990.

a year of swings, roundabouts, mambo and merengue.

THE DEATHS of Perez Prado, Desi Arnaz and Xavier Cugat, all in the same year, poignantly closed off the era when Hollywood was responsible for bringing Latin music to the world. In some circles, all three band leaders are discredited and even blamed for having sold out to Hollywood and cost Latin music its credibility, its respect and its quality. That line is for the purists and I've no time for it. Xavier Cugat was a showman par excellence; his mission as a popularizer of Cuban music was based on his lifelong pride in the music, and even at his most kitsch, he never lost touch with the music at the base of his career. Xavier Cugat brought Cuban music out into the world, and the world couldn't help dancing with him.

Desi Arnaz loved Lucy and America loved them both. Desi made Cubans real to the American people. If Desi was the stereotyped bossy, sentimental Cuban man, Lucy was the goofy, daffy, American airhead; but neither was true, and everyone recognised that. The programme threw up some great musical moments – with guests drawn in from the *creme* of the Cuban crop (an idea which Bill Cosby borrowed for his shows). Desi's musical moments were the inspiration for this year's Pulitzer Prize winner, the steamy atmospheric chronicle of the mambo era in New York – Oscar Hijuelos's *Mambo Kings Play Songs Of Love*. The book's launch coincided with the Charly mambo compilation of the same title. A Charly *sonne* welcomed Hijuelos with mambos and media glitz, and left the author dazed by the knowledge of and enthusiasm for Cuban music in this town.

Perez Prado's place in the history of Latin music is more substantial, musically, than the other two. Few Latin pianists have rivalled Prado's wild and free-flowing experiments within the Cuban mould that appear on his classic mambo recordings. Most Latin pianists – from Chucho Valdes to Michel Camilo – will testify to Prado's influence, but the public often remember him as a showman. His recordings with the gloriously soulful voice of Beny More are amongst the most uplifting combinations in Latin music.

The same criticisms of musicians who take Latin music into the wider world – today's crossover crowd – still surface, as they did when Cugie, Prado and Desi were at work, but now they tend to be attached to the modern equivalent of Hollywood rock/pop music zones. "Is the globe's lambada obsession any good for Brazilian music?" Is David Byrne, (and now Paul Simon), doing anything for Latin music or just exploiting it, diluting it and giving a false impression of it to the rest of the world? "Has Ruben Blades sold out by singing in English, using a kit drum, substituting synthesizers for the horns?"

It seems simple to me: if the new hybrids cut at musically, they must, by definition, have been made with integrity, love and respect, and a guaranteed spin-off is that fresh audiences discover the original inspirational music. David Byrne, Laurie Anderson (listen to her magnificent *Strange Angels* album for some Latin-Caribbean-gospel influences in utterly singular new combinations), Paul Simon's incorporation of Olodum *et al* will certainly open the gates for more Brazilian artists abroad. The new fusions and hybrids may sometimes lack the musical intensity and depth of the best Afro-Cuban or Colombian salsa, but they are attempting different things. And just 'cos none of them can dance don't matter a jot: the souls are in place.

One internal side-effect of this rock/pop adoption of Latin is the confidence it is giving the salsa record companies and promoters to support left-field material. Another way of seeing it is that the old formulae just don't sell no mo', and deeply conservative though they be, they *had* to adopt new ideas to survive. And as 1990 closed, New York's Latin scene was buzzing with tales of the in-fights between CBS Discos and EMI Capitol and RCA all tussling to sign Latin artists – not the balladeers and easy salsa-romantica which they've fed off till now, but the adventurers, the new mavericks.

Which leads me on to my 'Men of 1990'... the three challengers who have finally broken the absolutism of the 40s and 50s templates of mambo, charanga and other Cuban rhythms, and blasted salsa wide open with infusions from the outer Caribbean, Colombian, rock and American dance. I elect Juan Luis Guerra and his Grupo 4-40, and fellow Dominican salsero, Jose Alberto as Men of the Year, with Colombian Jose Arroyo close behind.

Juan Luis Guerra (merengue via Berklee School of Music and now into Miami) has transformed merengue with a musical sophistication and adventurousness which goes even further than Wilfrido Vargas, the 70s pioneer of a new sound. Guerra draws on soul-inspired vocal harmonies (two female, two male, voices), pulls the pace back from the brink, trawls around Latin America, especially Brazilian music, and relishes synthesized sound in its place. First his album, *Ojala Que Llegue Cafe*, and now two 12" singles, "Billurubina" and "Borbojas De Amor", have been talking points of the year, and led to imitators and fresh revisions of merengue.

Joan Man of the Year, Jose Alberto, *El Canario*, the Dominican singer and bandleader, gave me my musical highspot of 1990 at the Village Gate, a double bill with

continued on page 59

## take the E train

*Roll over Manhattan, tell New Orleans the news!*

*As US jazz continues to chase its tail*

*the freshest sounds are coming from Finland, Norway, Italy, France*

**Richard Cook** looks at the new players who are making Europe

*the jazzhaus of tomorrow. Photo by Nick White*

FOR MOST of us, jazz in Europe has seldom been the same thing as European jazz. Like everything else in post-war culture, jazz has been directed by American tastes and economics, although since it's supposed to be an Afro-American art form anyway this isn't entirely unreasonable (unless you ask how much say Afro-Americans have in those directions).

We here in the old world tend to look on our indigent jazz musicians with a mixture of protectionism and benign apathy. There are many local heroes, players that fans swear could cut any visiting giant, but most such musicians are fated to be never more than legends in their own neighbourhood. We prefer to look to America to nourish the jazz tradition and spawn its next movement, its undiscovered initiatives. Even now, when many of the most visible young American players are circling back through the jazz past to forge their own identities, we instinctively trust in the authenticity of American music as the way forward.

But let's ponder a sacrilegious alternative: isn't Europe coming to stand as the most interesting frontier for jazz progress? After decades as second-hand synthesizers of American advances, European players suddenly seem aware of their own feet. As jazz tradition has been dismantled through the 80s and 90s, with clear lines of development retreating before the trends for revisionism and repertory, the torch is waiting to be picked up.

As recently as 20 years ago, claims on behalf of jazz emanating from such territories as Switzerland, Finland or Italy wouldn't have found many takers. Maybe the occasional instrumentalist, such as Sweden's Lars Gullin or Italy's Giorgio Gaslini, could have won international respect, but for the most part Europeans were still being compared to Django Reinhardt as their sole exemplar. Only the free improvisers created a platform for themselves which extended beyond local boundaries – and free music has never been able to muster more than a small cadre of devotees.

The seeds of Europe's new bloom were, nevertheless, sown by that avant garde. The first generation of free players, now senior voices in Eurojazz, shared the dissatisfaction of the American avant garde of the 60s, although they had different gods to overturn – academicism, concert-hall manners, bourgeois values. Maybe it was difficult to hear European voices as angry, the way Archie Shepp and Albert Ayler were supposed to be angry, but the individual contributions of Peter Brötzmann, Willem Breuker, Alex Schlippenbach and Misha Mengelberg were as confrontational as anything coming out of America. Besides these, there were players who assimilated these extremes into a modern-mainstream approach, and did it even more convincingly than their American counterparts. Kenny Wheeler and Albert Mangelsdorff, for instance. All these musicians are by now secure in their own tradition, as steeped in their radical currency as the



AACM: the meeting of Alex Schlippenbach and Sunny Murray in FMP's *Smske*, with its shared passions and intimacies, might demonstrate how close a track their respective paths have followed.

IN THE 90s, such points of comparison might best be evaded. If the old revolutionary order showed the way, younger musicians have different priorities.

The shackles of 'the jazz tradition' seem less tight on Europe than on America, less confining in their formal and aesthetic possibilities to Europeans than to an American scene still directed by college imperatives, studio and club chores and the great god of radio. It's interesting that those American figures who've exerted an active influence on many of the younger European players are those who've paid least mind to those considerations: Carla Bley, George Russell, Gil Evans among them.

It's true that the upswing in British jazz was shaped by the new interest in the hard bop tradition, exemplified by such masters as Blakey, Rollins and Coltrane. But that tradition is already remote from any young player of European origin. Where an earlier generation might have been inspired by the presence of such expatriates as Dexter Gordon or Johnny Griffin or Kenny Clarke, and may have fashioned a lifetime dedication to that muse in the honourable manner of one such as Peter King or Nils Pedersen, it's now seen as a springboard to a universal vocabulary. The esperanto of rock and soul must play as strong a role in taste-forming, the example of David Sanborn and Marcus Miller probably holds as much creative promise to a young musician as that of any bopster.

This might be a ticket to the shallow vitality of eclecticism. But European players are finally doing more than playing American licks in continental accents. We could go back to Reinhardt on that one: his grounding in flamenco and café musics lent his improvising its distinctive touch. But the palpabilities of Eurojazz run deeper than that. Just as many Americans prefer terms like 'creative music', European players are pushing their way out of 'jazz' in the direction of – to use a nostalgic phrase – something else.

THE TWO musicians whose faces illustrate this article, Jan Garbarek and Andy Sheppard, each exemplify something of this search. Garbarek is a man between schools. He is a little too young to have been part of the 60s avant garde, and his early work suggests a chilly, baroque derivation of Coltrane. But his long sequence of ECM albums have charted a painstaking route away from jazz schools and habits without sacrificing the essentials of improvisation and harmonic inquiry which he began with. He claims not to be playing jazz at all now, which certainly squares with the mood of his recent records; so what are we to call it? And does it matter, anyway?

Andy Sheppard, a decade younger than the Norwegian, shares some of his attributes. On the face of it, Sheppard is immersed in the British jazz tradition of embellishing received models and tracing a personal outline. But his adventures over

the last two years suggest a difference. His records with Keith Tippett and the Soft On The Inside big band and the sideman work with George Russell and Carla Bley have amplified the outspoken cut of his small-band work, to the point where he already seems outside the polite lineage of Britjazz. It's a moot point how outstanding an instrumentalist he is, which is why some American commentators have been puzzled as to why Sheppard is quite so lionised. What's important is the way he's used the opportunities that have come to him. Instead of looking to sit in on all-star dates or meet with traditionalist peers, Sheppard has persistently sought out maverick associates.

I've chosen those two because they're among the most familiar names to many of us. But Europe is clearly bursting with comparable, as yet little-heard voices: a brief shortlist might include Edward Vesala (whose *Ode To The Death Of Jazz* throws down the sternest gauntlet to America yet), Louis Slavis, Thomas Heberer, Francois Lindemann, Joakim Milder, Christof Lauer, Roberto Ottaviano, Franz Koglmann, Pino Minafra, Urs Blochlinger, Anders Bergerantz, Maurice Magnoni... and these are the 'jazz' players, rather than the committed free musicians.

It may seem as if I'm excluding the British black contingent – or, worse still, trying to organise this argument on purely racial lines. But the aspirations of such musicians as Courtney Pine, Steve Williamson and the Mondseir brothers still tend towards emulating American eminence: Pine's association with Ellis Marsalis or Williamson's work with Steve Coleman have brought about some fine music, but nothing very different (or better) than that of their role models. A more fascinating prospect might be a fusion which draws its inspiration equally from the music of Kingston, Brooklyn and Soweto – a brew which Pine, for one, seems to be trying to concoct. Just as, perhaps, a personal sound emerges from Garbarek's blending of Lapp melodies and jazz dynamics, or Vesala's tango compositions, or Lindemann's exhilarating mid-European fusion.

THE IMPORTANT thing about this parade of identities is how vivid and characterful and unhampered they are. European players have suddenly made a virtue of their distance from American jazz disciplines. There's no central school of thought, just as no one country directs a musical policy (a single Eurocurrency of jazz expression seems about as far off as the fiscal sort which has been bothering many a government of late).

It doesn't seem too fanciful to propose that a reemerging mainstream is waiting to break cover – if promoters, distributors and especially audiences are prepared to let it. It's ironic that it may be our own snobbishness about jazz in Europe which is holding it back. There should be a clamour for these musicians' work to be heard and celebrated, instead of it being confined to obscure imports and the pages of this magazine's review section. It's time we stopped waiting for the latest from the Lower East Side. Europe beckons. ●

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# big noise from berlin

Steve Lake surveys the trials and triumphs of **Free Music Production**, one of Europe's first independent improv labels

YOU COULD make a case for the monumental *Cecil Taylor In Berlin '88*, that 11-CD collection, as a summation of Free Music Production's first 20 years and, on that basis, draw a conclusion along the lines of: *FMP, the plucky little Berlin label devoted to spontaneous music, is stronger than ever today*. You'd be right too, except "stronger than ever" is not, truth to tell, saying much: the company has spent most of the last two decades with its nostrils barely above water.

The opulence of the Taylor box is misleading. That project merits, certainly, the awards and acclaim showered upon it, but neither the box nor the concerts it commemorated would have been thinkable without a walloping grant from Berlin's *Senatsverwaltung für kulturelle Angelegenheiten*. In 1988, Berlin was Cultural City of Europe and FMP boss Jost Gebers managed to relieve the city's administration of some of its celebratory spare change: more power to him. But last November, once again, with a return of the traditional cash flow problem it was touch-and-go whether the Total Music Meeting, the annual improvisers' event that FMP hosts at the Quartier Latin, would happen.

Over the years, FMP has several times announced its own imminent demise. At the end of 1982, its machinery ground to a near-halt and for a period of about 18 months no new recordings were made. Then slowly – a grant here, a distribution deal there – the cogs were turning again and FMP was back in what is euphemistically called business. Nobody has become rich from FMP's endeavours – not Gebers himself, who runs the company as a sort of mad and debilitating hobby

while holding down an eight-hour-a-day job as a social worker, not the musicians who record for the label, and we won't even mention the wild-eyed sleeve-note writers with their tin cups, at the bottom of improv's totem pole.

Taylor's *Berlin '88* project, retrospectively "important", represented FMP at its most *glaw*. (At the time, the Berlin Kongresshalle was never full, though tickets cost next to nothing, and the critics stayed away in droves.) It was a project that can't easily be topped, at least not without indulging in three-ring all-star festival projects of the kind FMP set out originally to oppose.

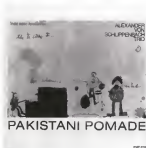
Though the cooperation with Taylor continues, FMP's real job, year in year out, has been the programming of concerts and festivals featuring a small group of German improvisers and their international friends and the dutiful recording of them. FMP records sound better now than they did in the hairshirt *documentary* days, but the recordings still accompany the live work, they are illustrations from it, progress reports. In a sense, every FMP record could be called *The Story So Far*. There's little sense of the records as finished artefacts; calling them *productions* is pushing it.

Comrade Berr Noglik in generous mood asserted in FMP's 20th birthday booklet that "the musical range of FMP's presentations and productions is simply colossal . . . much wider than the narrow tracks radio service stations follow". Though the range is broader than detractors might allow, there can be no denying that the company's focus has often been locked upon good old European Ayler/Eisler-influenced





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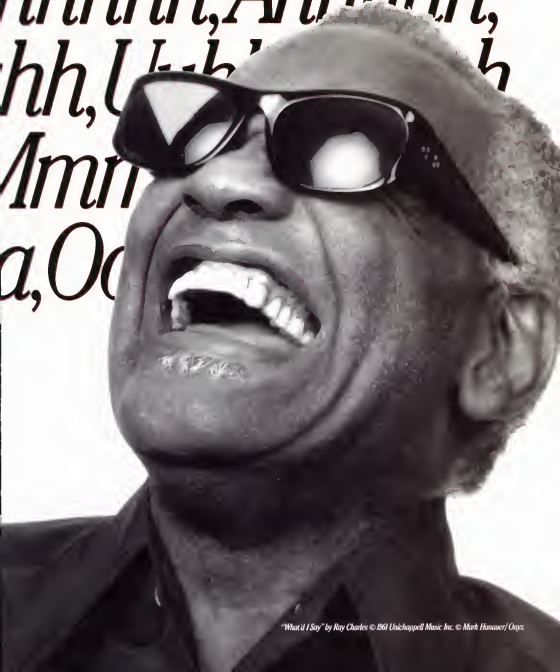
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free jazz. Classic albums of the first decade, Globe Unity's *Live In Wuppertal*, say, or Ulrich Gumpert's *Echo Von Karolinenhof*, might be described as workers' epiphanies, or revelations by and for the non-religious and irreligious. (Albert and Hanns meet in the march, incidentally, wearing beards and boots.)

FMP textures still tend towards the dense rather than the spacious, clusters and glissandi swirling thick and fast. Shrieking flageolet-notes abound, the "natural" sounds of horns give way to multiphonics as a matter of course (though the natural sounds get more respect today than 20 years ago), pianos seldom escape spontaneous "preparation" nor cymbals bowing and scraping, drum kits are customized to incorporate the unlovely dull thud beside the sonorous boom . . . Techniques have been refined over the years, but never over-refined and the old *huput-play* syndrome will still work at a pinch. This is, after all, mostly *live* (living) music meant to move and energize an audience. Not all of it bears repeating.

IN THE beginning, FMP was planned as a musicians collective and the launching of a record label was viewed as the necessary next step in the attempt to take care of the music outside the conventional jazz establishment. Previous efforts had included the founding of the New Artists Guild by Peter Brötzmann in 1966, which lasted only five months but prompted the self-financed recording of 1968's crucial *Machete Gnu*, originally issued on Brötzmann's own BRO label but destined, upon reissue, to be FMP's first release.

In 1968, anti-festivals organized in Cologne (by Alex von Schlippenbach) and Berlin (by Gebers and Co), established the originally rather truculent mood of protest in which FMP was launched. Gebers, then still a bass player, was one voice in a committee that also included Brötzmann, Schlippenbach, Peter Kowald and, a little later, Hans Reichel, Irene Schweizer and Rudiger Carl. Gradually – to telescope a decade into a sentence – the musicians chafed away, leaving Gebers in the organizer's chair.

FMP made its recording debut in 1969 with Manfred Schoof's *European Echoes*, a large ensemble set featuring Rava, Brötzmann, Dudek, Parker, Bailey, Rutherford, van Hove, Schlippenbach, Schweizer, Kowald, Niebergall, Bennink, Favre. Pierre Favre was to abandon the more rough-and-tumble aspects of energy playing, Enrico Rava and Gerd Dudek to work across the broadest range of new jazz, but all these musicians are still delivering, and Brötzmann, Kowald and Schlippenbach still record as leaders for FMP.

Conspicuous in absence from the early manifestos – Schoof's record, *Machete Gnu* and Schlippenbach's *The Living Music* – was multi-instrumentalist Gunter Hampel, who in 1962 had led Germany's first proto-free band. By 1969 more closely allied with the US avant garde as personified by Braxton, Marion Brown, Perry Robinson, and constant companion Jeanne Lee, Hampel ran his Birth label in transatlantic hops between Göttingen and the Bronx. In 1980, he finally had a solo album *Waves/Wellen* on FMP and was to be a key figure in the internal organization of Taylor's European Orchestra . . .

But apart from Hampel, all the major voices of German free jazz, and many of the stronger players from neighbouring territories, quickly gravitated to the label. Albert Mangelsdorff, already a star in a straighter jazz idiom, undergoes his free baptism on the trilogy *Elementi/Conscious De La Maatrespiel/The End*, exhaustive documentation of a knockabout 1971 guest gig with the intimidating/hilarious Brotzmann/van Hove/Bennink trio, and is an important contributor from then on.

Few of the younger free players have marched the strengths of the 68/69 crew, trombonist Johannes Bauer from the former GDR, a fresh-faced 36, and Dutch saxophonist Peter van Bergen, a mere 33, are a couple of the exceptions. *Don't trust an improviser under 40* is a useful rule of thumb today, and FMP's recently added old rather than new talents to the roster. Hence Cecil Taylor (61 this year), Sunny Murray (53), and legendary 54-year-old Swiss altoist Werner Lüdi (legendary because he stretched a Rollins-like retirement into a 14-year disappearing act), a veteran of Hampel's '62 unit and now leader of his own noisily articulate band Blauer Hirsch (see *Cyberpunk*) and occasional Brotzmann partner (as on *Wie Das Leben So Spielt*).

Burrowing through miles of red tape, FMP made contact with the East German improvisers in 1972 and began licensing their records, making history with the aforementioned *Echo Von Karolinenhof* in 1979, the first co-production with the GDR's state-run Amiga label.

Until recently all the non-German projects picked up by FMP were shunted onto the SAJ label which bears the initials of Swedish drummer Sven-Ake Johansson (his 1972 solo album was the first release). In the CD era, this national demarcation, inappropriate to improvisation's boundary-busting ideals, is finally given the heave-ho. It's all FMP music now, whether it's strictly free music (whatever that finally means) or not, and it's been international since *Machete Gnu* anyway, regardless of the band leaders' birthplaces. ●

#### A few great FMP/SAJ records (in addition to those mentioned above):

Of Brötzmann's 40-odd FMP appearances, I return most often to *Opened*. But *Hardly Touchable*, the double LP with Harry Miller and Louis Moholo, probably the most outstanding saxophone trio album since *The Trio's The Trio*. Globe Unity's records are all crucial – *Evidence* and *Into The Valley* (with Lucy) and *Pearls* (with Braxton) should be cornerstones of anybody's collection while *Hansberg '74*, a preposterous collusion with the North German Radio Choir, is the most fun you can have legally. Globe Unity's status as leading free-sh orchestra is challenged by Barry Guy's 1JCO on *Stranger* – also wonderful.

Schlippenbach's *Pakistanis* Posaak introduces the trio with Parker and Lovens which has surprised the participants by becoming free improv's longest-lived small group. All too short-lived was the Chicago/Wuppertal/Dresden trio of Leo Smith, Peter Kowald and Gunter Sommer – there's some very sensitive playing on *Touch The Earth* and *Break The Shell*. Kowald, second most prolific FMPer, also sounds particularly good on *De Jaeger*, where he's teamed with his former teacher Barre Phillips.

Guitarist Hans Reichel's solo albums *Bonobo* and *Data 8 Of Dickinson* are very pretty. Doro Korb Tippert's three *Marjans* excursions. And *Open*, with Gerd Dudek, Buschi Niebergall and Edward Vesala is a rare example of the great saxophonist encouraged to dominate a session – it prompts one to ask why there aren't 40 Dudek albums on FMP – or anywhere else.

# jazz sans frontières

**A Wire guide to European festivals.**

*Each year, Europe plays host to several hundred jazz festivals. Below, we present the **Wire** guide to the 50 or so major festivals which are both international in scope and include a significant element of modern jazz. Because their dates tend to vary from year to year, and many for 1991 have still to be finalised, we have included a guide to how many days the festival usually last and whether they take place early, mid or late in the month - late + indicates the festival may run on into the following month. Remember to add an 010 before all continental contact phone numbers.*

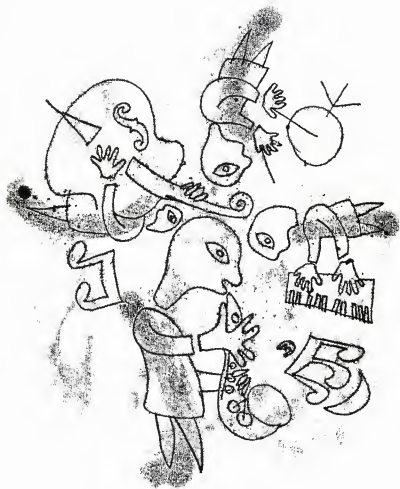


Illustration by MARTIN CHESTERMAN

## JANUARY

**France:** *Festival International De Jazz De Rive De Gier*  
13 days/late +  
33 77 75 05 22 / 67 65 14 85

## FEBRUARY

**Greece:** *Prinx Festival (Athens)*  
17 days/late + No contact number

## MARCH

**Switzerland:** *Takidis Festival (Basle, Bern, Zurich)* 3 days/mid  
41 1 383 8233

**UK (England):** *Caravan Festival (London)* 6 days/mid-late  
071 437 4967

## APRIL

**France:** *Europa Jazz Festival Du Mexi (Le Mans)* 4 days/late +  
33 43 24 22 44 / 43 24 73 85  
**Germany:** *Ulrichsberger Kleinfest (Ulrichsberg)*  
3 days/late 49 72 88 22 19 27

## MAY

**Germany:** *Internationale Jazz Festival Mannheim* 3 days/mid  
49 2 51 66 49 55  
*Internationale New Jazz Festival Mueni* 4 days/late +  
49 2841 7411 / 201722  
*Jazzfest Kassel* 2 days/late +  
49 5 61 10 63 41 / 28 46 92  
**UK (England):** *Bath International Festival* 17 days/late +  
0225 448243  
*Brighton Festival* 25 days  
0273 688930

## JUNE

**Germany:** *Jazz An Der Donau (Viadriner)* 3 days/mid  
49 8 31 5 40 48  
**Italy:** *Ravenna Jazz (Rocca Brasconese)* 4 days/late +

39 544 37864  
**UK (Scotland):** *Dundee Jazz Festival* 4 days/late  
0382 27684 / 23281  
*Glasgow International Jazz Festival*  
10 days/late + 041 226 5105  
**USSR:** *Thelin Jazz Festival*  
10 days/varies  
7 8832 99 93 31  
**Yugoslavia:** *International Jazz Festival (Ljubljana)* 3 days/varies  
38 61 212 600 / 221 121

## JULY

**Austria:** *Konfessionsen (Niederdorf)* 3 days/late  
43 21 46 2359  
**Denmark:** *Copenhagen Jazz Festival* 10 days/early-mid  
45 33 93 20 13  
**Finland:** *Pori International Jazz Festival* 9 days/early-mid  
358 39 41 1 565  
**France:** *Festival d'Antibes*  
10 days/late 33 9333 9564  
*Grande Parade Du Jazz (Nice)*  
10 days/early-mid  
31 1 46 21 08 37  
**Holland:** *Internationale Jazz Festival (Amsterdam)* 6 days/early  
31 20 211211  
*North Sea Jazz Festival (The Hague)* 3 days/mid  
31 70 350 2034  
**Hungary:** *International Jazz Festival (Budapest)* 3 days/mid  
36 1 186 99 32 / 185 01 38  
**Italy:** *Europa Jazz Festival (Noci)*  
4 days/mid 39 80 89 71 299/301  
*Umbria Jazz Festival (Perugia)*  
10 days/early-mid  
39 75 624 32 / 261 13  
**Norway:** *Molde International Jazz Festival* 6 days/mid-late  
47 7 25 37 79 / 52 67  
**Switzerland:** *Montreux Jazz Festival* 16 days/early-mid

41 21 963 12 12  
**UK (England):** *Birmingham International Jazz Festival*  
10 days/early-mid  
021 454 7020  
*JVC Capital Jazz Parade (London)*  
6 days/mid 071 388 1288  
*Wigan Jazz Festival*  
8 days/mid-late 0942 828032

## AUGUST

**Italy:** *Rosella Jazz Festival (Rosella Jonica)* 5 days/late  
39 964 85046  
**Switzerland:** *International Jazz Festival Willisau*  
5 days/late + 41 45 81 27 31  
**UK (England):** *Conspiracy Week (London)* 5 days/varies  
081 986 6904  
**UK (Scotland):** *McEwan Edinburgh International Jazz Festival* 8 days/late  
031 557 1642  
*TDK Edinburgh Round Midnight Festival* 4 days/late  
031 557 4446  
**UK (Wales):** *Brecon Jazz Festival* 3 days/mid  
0222 483422

## SEPTEMBER

**Germany:** *Internationale Jazzfestival Vrense* 3 days/late  
49 21 62 1 84 08  
**Switzerland:** *Internationale Jazzfestival Zurich* varies/late +  
41 1 2 16 31 69  
**UK (England):** *Outlook In Festival (Croyley, Sussex)*  
2 days/early 071 437 4967

## OCTOBER

**Czechoslovakia:** *Bratislava Jazz Days* 3 days/late  
42 7 52426 / 334 948 / 334 161  
**France:** *Festival De Jazz De*

*Poit* 15 days/late +  
33 1 42 30 25 85  
**Germany:** *Leverkusener Jazztage (Leverkusen)* 10 days/early-mid  
49 214 352 4100 / 240 79  
**Ireland:** *Cork International Jazz Festival* 4 days/late  
0001 333 609233  
**Poland:** *International Jazz Jamboree Festival (Warsaw)*  
4 days/varies  
48 219451 / 277904  
**UK (England):** *Norwich Jazz Festival* 7 days/mid 0603 660352  
**UK (Scotland):** *Aberdeen Alternative Festival* 10 days/mid  
0224 635822  
**USSR:** *Jazzdays (Arhangelsk)*  
3 days/early 7 81800 45 235  
**Yugoslavia:** *Zagreb Jazz Fair*  
6 days/varies 38 41 43 56 13

## NOVEMBER

**Finland:** *Tampere Jazz Happening* 3 days/early  
358 31 146 905  
**Germany:** *Ingolstadt Jazztage*  
4 days/early 49 8 41 30 57 29  
*Jazzfest Berlin* 5 days/early  
49 30 25 48 92 50  
*Total Music Meeting (Berlin)*  
3 days/early 49 30 3 41 54 47  
**Greece:** *International Jazz & Improvised Music Festival (Thessaloniki)* 15 days/late +  
30 31 216 124 / 277 641  
**Spain:** *Madrid Jazz Festival* 10 days/varies 34 96 374 0693  
**UK (England):** *Jazz Laundry Festival (London)* 14 days/early  
071 829 8435  
**UK (Northern Ireland):** *Belfast Festival At Queen's*  
14 days/mid-late 0232 667 687  
**USSR:** *Astana Rhythms (Leningrad)* 5 days/varies  
7 812 31 18 015

**jazz ON VIDEO**

**The Power Of Three**  
 Michel Petrucciari,  
 Wynne Shorter, Jim Hall  
 Filmed at the Montreux Jazz Festival and  
 including: Beautiful Love, Sentimental  
 Mood, Careful, Weltz New, Limbo, Morning  
 & Simini.

**The Manhattan Project**  
 Michel Petrucciari, Wynne  
 Shorter, Stanley Clarke,  
 Lenny White.  
 Filmed at the Chelsea TV Studios, New York,  
 and including: Old Wine-New Bottles, Denis,  
 Autumn Leaves, Nefertiti, Virgo Rising,  
 Goodbye Pork Pie Hat & Summertime.

**Cornucopia On Video**  
 Stanley Jordan, Kenny  
 Kirkland, Charnet Moffet,  
 Jeff Woot.  
 A film of the incredible concert from which  
 much of Stanley Jordan's highly successful  
 Cornucopia album was taken, and  
 including: Impressions, Autumn Leaves,  
 For You, Cousin Mary, Flying Home, Willow  
 Weep For Me, Over The Rainbow, Still Got  
 The Blues, Lady In My Life & What's Goin' On.

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Further information and application forms are available from John Muir, Music Officer, Arts Council of Great Britain, 16 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3NQ. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must be enclosed.

Completed application forms should be returned by 15 February 1991.

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Howard Mandel at the core of the Apple.



Last order at Mahell's

Photo by ANDREW POTHECARY

AT LAST writing I was headed to back-beat heaven, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival where Chuck Berry, surveying the vast field of avid fans a few years ago, cried "My children, my children!" before pealing out "School Days", which few of us would ever see again. In N'Awlins, unlike New York, nostalgia blurs with present pleasures, just as birth-of-jazz ensembles echo the rhythmic heart of the National Dance Troupe of Senegal and preview the clash-of-elements cohesion Ornette Coleman achieved with Prime Time.

Had meant to search out the oldest surviving jazz, roots of the enduring *played* music of the modern age, but what stays in mind is a Tribute To Albert Ayler wherein NO energy champ Kidd Jordan squalled; the Reverend Frank Wright leapt and hollered rather than feeling himself through his horn (he passed on in Germany a few weeks later); and Dewey Redman took his sweet, bluesy time establishing a quirky path out of strident melody, rhythm and harmony seem to prescribe.

Then came Ornette, with keyboardist (for the first time since Walter Nottis circa 1959's *Something Else!*) David Bryant providing a totally *other* way the unison dissonance can flow, should guitarists Kenny Wessel and Chris Rosenberg get complacent with the no-down-beat set by Denardo on electric sampling traps, no-patterns of tablaist Badal Roy, heroic endeavours of bassist Al MacDowell (find his album *Time Peace*) and ever-open-to-whim Fearless Leader.

As this Prime Time has performed exactly once in the

States, we envied Europeans its autumn tour. As for ex-PTimers, Charlie Elletbee appeared with OC's frequent companion, beautiful and silvery-voiced Mari Okuba, at the Knitting Factory in November. Jamaaladeen Tacuma came up from Philadelphia for Gramavision's jam session celebrating of its tenth anniversary. Turn to poet Jayne Cortez's third album, *Everywhere Drama*, for guitarist Bern Nix (with Denardo, McDowell, and others).

Ms. Cortez (Ornette's former wife and Denardo's mother), worries the bop-conservative kids who tob daring individuals such as Bern of gigs. He worked the elite Victrolaville Quebec fest, duo'd in Manhattan with singer-composer Kitty Beazleton at the bar-club Spital, and occasionally joins keyboardist Bryant's trio Shock Exchange in Boston. Bern finds hustling tiresome, and despairs that his long exposure to harmolodics has spoiled him for any music more, uh, conventional. So don't expect him booked at the Vanguard (where Henry Threadgill's two-guitars/two tubas-Very Very Circus stretched the point). But his alternative approach to Charlie Christian's heritage bears consideration.

**SHORT SUMMER:** Since late June's JVC jazz fest there's been *nost*, *should* and *dream* music. George Wein's schedule of brand-name players at prestige venues (and Knit Fac faves at the little-known, little-hyped midtown Whitney Museum at Equitable Centre auditorium) is every year less a must for pros and more a wanna for tourists. No surprises from

fray-voiced, rhythmically game Ella or Miles whose smaller, sparer band was captured in time for Christmas on Warner Bros. video. George Benson and McCoy Tyner were awfully alone together; Wayne Shorter muffed (bad reed or mike?) a touted reunion with Milton Nascimento; engaging Bobby McFerrin turned to desperate performance art with uneasy Chuck Corea.

That bassist-photo documentarian Milt Hinton celebrated his 80-plus years with a show of community; reclusive guitar master Jim Hall was honoured by plectral offspring Scofield, Abercrombie, Metheny; Fusion's Fab Four (Metheny, Hancock, Holland and DeJohnette) lent that atrophied style fresh vigour – feels like old news.

The entire Lincoln Centre complex would be the best jazz fest site if access to the park, reflecting pool and fountain could be controlled (or free music there subsidized). Tickets sold out for a week of jazz at comfy Alice Tully Hall programmed by Wynton Marsalis and Stanley Crouch. Highlights: broad-shouldered Chicago tenorist Von Freeman and his sly, resourceful pianist John Young triumphed in friendly battle with Johnny Griffin's quartet; Jackie McLean seemed out of place on the concert stage but his sound is still acid and Larry Willis got hot on parts intended for recently-deceased, underappreciated pianist Walter Davis Jr.

At Summerstage in Central Park, the season's busy JB

Horns (Maceo Parker, Fred Wesley and Pee Wee Ellis, "People want the *real* thing after hearing us sampled on all these rap tunes," Wesley explained), pleaded "Let Him Out" re James Brown, who's still in stir. Max Roach and Randy Weston drew throngs to the Brooklyn Museum's sculpture garden opening an African/American series.

Uptown, Mikell's closed and downtown, far east, WEBO opened with free-blowing Peter Brötzmann, bassist Fred Hopkins and drummer Greg Bendian. The Knit Fac had the Leningrad Duo (trumpeter Yuri Gavoronsky and bassist Vladimir Volkov deconstructing "Yankee Doodle Dandy" forever), and TRI-O (Moscow-based reedist Sergei Levitov, tubast/vocalist Atkady Kirichenko, and bassist Alexander Alexandroff) proving however far the music's flung, it returns like a boomerang with an extra spin.

I returned from a Cape Cod vacation (only music made by my resident composer on her four-track MIDI studio), purpose renewed. The free, nationally-broadcast Chicago Jazz Festival climaxed with Muhai Richard Abams leading an orchestra to salute the AACM's 25th year, and the AACM got me into all this. Muhai, Leroy Jenkins, half the Art Ensemble, Chico Freeman, Threadgill and Fred Hopkins, Reggie Nicholson, Amina Claudine Myers, among others, are New Yorkers now, ready to go anywhere. That's the spirit to adopt for the rest of jazz's first century. ●

## Latin Year

### Latin continued from page 33

Arroyo, when the two men duetted for half a set, skipped between each other's hit songs and urged each other into new heights of improvised glories. Jose Alberto's own set was a showcase of his talents – from the extraordinary improvised flute solo, scattered then whistled like the crystal-clear charanga style of a Nestor Torres or Johnny Pacheco – to several firecracking timbales solos, with such ease and delight . . . New York salsa hasn't seen this kind of live musical passion in years.

Joe Arroyo's exact and funky band, and his sharp, abrasive vocals, have won him the hearts of the Latin diaspora. Arroyo's Caribbean perspectives have breathed new life into the stale, old-fashioned salsa, and helped spearhead a vital alternative to the ghostly *romantica* obsessions.

The outsiders at this year's Annual Salsa Festival (extended to Meadowlands as well as Madison Square Gardens) were Orquesta Da La Luz – a full-scale, Spanish-speaking, Japanese salsa band. The lead singer has a deep, rich voice and a Spanish patter, and her musicians even caught the breath of the jaded Latinos. There's gimmickry at work, no doubt, but the band sustained a week's club-dates with some great playing.

THANKS TO Mango for their enthusiasm for salsa and providing us with the best of the crop. Also to Earthworks, World Circuit and Globestyle for continuing to make this music available here. And to London's first specialist Latin

music shop, Mr Bongo, in Berwick Street, London W1, which was opened by the Miami Cuban superstar Roberto Torres, on the afternoon of his debut London gig.

As Cuba gets more isolated and the flow of music and musicians into this country has turned into a trickle, it's at least consoling that the salsa musicians outside the island are continuing their tributes to the composers by issuing covers. Sonora Poncena's elegant *Into the 90s*, with some sparkling displays of Papo Lucca's piano-playing, and Roberto Roena's *New Decade* albums, both feature fairly close covers of Pablo Milanes songs.

Attention in the UK media has correspondingly switched from Cuba to broader Latin American areas, and yielded some excellent events. The current exhibition of Mexican photography opened its UK tour with a Marachi band fanfare and flowing Mexican beer; BBC2 ran Kim Evans's fascinating documentary on the Brazilian writer Jorge Amado, whose books are read by millions of Latin Americans but still hardly known here. She brought the story to life with local Bahia music and interviews and created a suitably magical impression of the author and his world. Paul Simon finally overcame birth fears and released his tribute to Brazilian, African, and Latin music, played the *Wogan* show and will now awaken the world to fresh sounds, as he did with *Graceland*. The whiners still carp on about cultural imperialism, while the music keeps on spreading. When did you last see majestic Bahian percussionists Oludum on *Top Of The Pops*? ●

## hardware

*Ton "ton" Corbin takes a stick or two to the latest jazz drumkits.*



IN PRACTICAL terms, jazz drumming seems to be suffering a singular identity crisis at present. If this is a fault, then drummers themselves have a lot to do with it. Fusion drummers, funk drummers and even improvising drummer/percussionists seem to be sitting at the back of many a notional 'jazz' ensemble and have been doing so for many a year now. My pet theory is that younger players will tend to react to the kind of drumming they hear most often, which is going to be rock, funk or drumbox dancebeat. You hear a saxophone, the chances are it'll be a jazz saxophone, so no ambiguity there. But drums...

The ambivalence is compounded when you go into a drum shop. And it has to be a drum shop – the times when you could find a basement full of drums in any self-respecting instrument shop seem to be fading fast, chiefly because drums don't sell in large quantities anywhere (Roger Horrobin at Premier once told a *Wired* staffperson that drums and percussion account for a mere 10% of all instrument sales, and he should know). They are, after all, mostly round boxes full of air occupying valuable space which in lean times must be more profitably filled by more expensive and/or easily turned-over instruments and equipment. Anyway, having found your drum shop, what do you look for if you want some jazz drums? The answer is less obvious than it once was. Most of the drumkits you'll see on stages, whether they're being used for rock, jazz or rugby club cabaret nights, will have been designed and assembled with the rock musician primarily in mind. So, as drums get deeper, heavier and more loosely tuned, with their attendant hardware looking more and more like bomber undercarriage, *Hardware* fearlessly demands to know: just which manufacturers currently acknowledge the existence of the jazz drummer?

LOVERS OF the mythology of musical instruments will be relieved to know that the traditionally definitive jazz drummer's drum is still available. Gretsch drums are alive and well and made in the USA, thank you very much, and being distributed in the UK by Percussion Plus (0858 433124). Currently used by Tony Williams among others and used at one time by Art Blakey (although in recent years he had switched to the market-sweeping Japanese brand Pearl), the Gretsch catalogue still carries several variations on the traditional jazz kit – one bass drum at the seemingly minimal diameter of 18" or 20", one shell-mounted 8"×12" tom-tom and one 14"×14" floor tom. The small sizes ensure the crisp, snappy sound which you've always heard on period small-band jazz records and which also permit the relatively high-pitched drum tunings which the music tends to favour. None of this is innovative, apart from the obvious advances in manufacturing standards, but purpose-built jazz kits are certainly easier on

your nerves than trying to tune great big wallop rock drums up to jazz pitch and listening to ominous creaks of protest from the shells.

Ludwig, another grand marque in the drum world despite being forever identified with Ringo (apparently he bought them because they were the right colour; we jazzboys would never do such a thing, right?) also do a maple-shelled jazz kit and advertise it as such. The drum dimensions are much as for the Gretsch kits, except that Ludwig seem to think that a third tom-tom is called for, and unusually enough have tagged it onto the top rather than the bottom end of the pitch range, giving us a 7"×10" tom. Bippitybappetybop! Ludwig drums are now made in Taiwan, however, which seems to have eroded their reputation a little. Speak as you find, says I. Ludwig drums are distributed by Vincent Bach (081 905 9505) in the UK.

Finally, there's that mongrel labelled the fusion kit, several examples of which are also produced by Gretsch and indeed by the name most easily identified with the UK drum manufacturing industry, Premier (0533 773121). The latter company's mixed fortunes in recent years culminated in their being bought out by Yamaha a while back. Their fusion kit seems to share with most of those produced by Gretsch the idea that the floor tom is unsuitable for the projection and clarity of pitch demanded of fusion styles. The old three-legged job is therefore dispensed with and replaced by one or more super-large stand-mounted toms. This seems eminently sensible to me. The floor-standing tom always struck me as something of an anachronism anyway, its sound inevitably differing from that of the remainder of the kit simply because it points at the floor. Other than that, so-called fusion kits seem to differ from their rock counterparts mainly in terms of their target market, but at least these manufacturers are aware that there is one.



SO, WHERE to buy some new drums? Well, in the West End of London, things are looking better than they did. With the closure of FD&H and the drum department of Rose Morris some time ago, drummers and percussionists were sadly squeezed out of Tin Pan Alley. Now, however, the breach has been closed by DrumStop (071 379 6690), a new venture situated above Argents keyboard shop at 20 Denmark Street, London WC2. This is a pretty brave thing to do in the current economic climate, so more power to them. Apart from drums'n'stuff, Drumstop keeps an imaginative variety of Latin and non-western percussion, much of which will be of interest to the inquisitive *Wired* musician.

Finally, *Hardware's* first correction. Trevor J. James & Co would like to point out that their 'Horn' alto sax mentioned in issue 81 has a starting RRP of £635 and not the laughable £335 quoted in the article. Many apologies.

# the charts

*Every month on this page, a selection of informative, contentious and plain opinionated statistics from the extraordinary orbit of the world's jazz and new music magazine. Why not send us your own current playlist?*

## eurojazz classics

1. **Parisian Thoroughfare** *Rud Prevell*
2. **Dear Old Stockholm** *Stan Getz*
3. **Chelsea Bridge** *Billy Strayhorn*
4. **How Are Things in Giocca Morra** *Savoy Rollins*
5. **Copenhagen** *Fletcher Henderson*
6. **Swingin' At Maida Vale** *Benny Carter*
7. **Roma** *Steve Lacy*
8. **Midnight In Moscow** *Kenny Ball*
9. **Spanish Key** *Miles Davis*
10. **Berlin Wall** *Amalgam*

*Compiled by the Hard Ears*

## new year best-sellers

1. **Eight (+3) Tristano Compositions 1989** *Anthony Braxton* (Just ART)
2. **Extensions** *Dave Holland Quartet* (ECM)
3. **I Took Up The Ruses** *Jane Garbarek* (ECM)
4. **Hot Stuff** *Barbara Deneroff* (Enja)
5. **For Members Only** *Tabby Hayes* (Miles Music)
6. **Berlin Contemporary Jazz Orchestra** (ECM)
7. **Summer Wind** *Ray Brown Trio* (Concord)
8. **Stormy Weather** *Ben Webster* (Black Lion)
9. **Tribute** *Kath Jarrett* (ECM)
10. **A Swingin' Affair** *Roly Braff & Randy Tate* (Black Lion)

*The "selling like hotcakes" New Year CD chart courtesy of Mark at Cherry Jazz Mail Order*

*5 Prospect Road, Chesham, Herts EN8 9GX*

## eight records lost by jim paterson

1. **Mohawk** *New York Art Quartet* (Fontana)
2. **In Europe** *Charles Lloyd Quartet* (Atlantic)
3. **The Avant Garde** *John Coltrane/Don Cherry* (Atlantic)
4. **Cadential Nova Danica** *Jake Tobacas* (Polydisc)
5. **The Inflated Tear** *Roland Kirk* (Atlantic)
6. **Nefertiti, The Beautiful One Has Come** *Cecil Taylor* (Arista)
7. **The Baptized Traveller** *Tony Oxley* (CBS)
8. **Anatomy Of A South African Village** *Dollar Brand* (Fontana)

*Sent to by Jim Paterson of Glasgow*

## ten great european venues

1. **New Morning** (Paris)
2. **Cafe Montmartre** (Copenhagen)
3. **Four Bars Inn** (Cardiff)
4. **Bim Huis** (Amsterdam)
5. **Queens Hall** (Edinburgh)
6. **Vortex** (Secker, Newington)
7. **Sinyaya Ptitsa** (Moscow)
8. **Cafe Central** (Madrid)
9. **Jazzclub Unterfahrt** (Munich)
10. **Akwarium** (Warsaw)

*Compiled by Freddie Frenkel*



ROLAND KIRK - top of the road history

## soundcheck



*In February's febrile Soundcheck*

**Miles** *is a hot spot*

**Kirk** *criss fires*

**Evan** *takes Atlanta*

**Frith** *walks the borderline*

**Minha** *howls at the moon*

**Motian** *turns out the stars*

*Plus: a Cannonball, a Burn out, a Riley solo and a Thomas re the tradition*



**EVAN PARKER/  
WALTER PRATI**

*Hall Of Mirrors*  
HMAT51 CD

*Hall Of Mirrors, Double Negative, Zoogma, Give, Semi-serious, Event Horizon, The Port Said Model (For Conrad Cork), Inala*  
Evan Parker (sax), Walter Prati (live electronics)  
Rec. February 1990

**EVAN PARKER TRIO**

*Atlanta*  
Impulse IMP 18417 CD/LP

*Atlanta, Two In One, The Snake At Road Sign, Geometry*  
Evan Parker (sax, ts), Barry Guy (b), Paul Lytton (d), percussion  
Rec. 12 December 1986

NOTHING MORE desolating than his admirers, nobody more lost than his foes. If his acolytes are a quarter right – and they're certainly not wholly wrong – the more Evan Parker advances his art, the farther he leaves behind even his closest contemporaries. Friend and foe alike would isolate Parker in a sound-proofed room, far from any other living musician, for fear of the master blowing them all away.

Of course the prospect of Parker alone, simultaneously pushing ahead with his soprano sax monologues while building on his multiphonic techniques, is no bad thing – as the Parker/Prati disc richly demonstrates. But to condemn the man to a lifetime's solitary confinement on the basis of his unmatched virtuosity – as reviews of the recent EMP sax doubles set seemed to suggest – is patently absurd. Such a conclusion hardly allows for Parker's generosity of spirit. It also reinforces the idea of improvisation as a gladiatorial arena, rather than the idealised space for spontaneous composition.

Even so, it is not really the place for gentlemen, politely giving way to oncoming traffic. And certainly Parker's trio don't drive in fear of each other. So the sometimes deferential *Atlanta* is a surprise. It begins well enough, with the trio re-opening lines of communication. In time the music goes on more than it grows. But the composition eventually pulls forward on Parker's spiralling

ing tenor curves and suddenly the three are all pitching in ferociously, locking the music in the closest free gets to a tight jazz groove. It finally takes off when it atomises around the solo spots, during which energy's gathered for the exhilarating closing stotms.

In the more controlled studio environs of Walter Prati's Milan studio, Parker has discovered a pleasurable new warp through which to advance his solitary soprano experiments in the Italian's minimal electronic treatments. A most self-effacing collaborator, Prati's role is often as invisible as silence itself. So much so you first get the impression Parker is alone with his echo and wonder what the music is achieving that the saxophonist hasn't done before with his multiphonic layering methods. But its very quietism establishes the conditions for what



Pauline Oliveros has described as deep listening. And as the ear grows accustomed to it, so does the depth of Prati's involvement reveal itself.

Only on "The Port Said Model", a work coed by a pulverised voice, does Prati release the studio's hidden demons. Otherwise, he mostly electronically ghosts Parker's source sounds in subtle extensions of the saxophonist's harmonic pile-ups. Elsewhere he constructs a shimmering energy field round Parker's gently wavering templates. Though the saxophonist leads the compositions, Prati somehow guides them. That is, the Italian's studio ambiances help determine the course of Parker's blowing. For his part he responds to conditions as he would in any free session, sensitive to both the moment and the music's final shape.

The results are invariably as euphoric as ambient house and often breathtakingly beautiful, the quiet force accumulated in them absolutely ravishing.

BIBA KOPE

**PAUL BLEY &  
GARY PEACOCK**

*Partners*  
Owl 656 3800382 CD

*Again Ahead, Pleurodes Skirt, Octave, Latin Geometry, Workroom, Afternoon Of A Dream, Hand In Hand, Sassy Sassy, Lull-a-bye, Twitter Pat, Who's Who Is It?, Gently Gently, Mapetique, Fat Luck, No Paw Intended*  
Paul Bley (p), Gary Peacock (b) Rec. 18 December 1989

ALTHOUGH RECORDED just four days before the *Belop* album (see *Wire* 78) this session superficially bears no relationship to it.

Yet truly to understand Bley's work it seems necessary to realise that in the period during which he came fully to maturity (say from 1953, his first appearance on record, until about 1965) jazz exploded, the rules of harmony and metre becoming fundamentally questioned rather than manipulated, and melody redefined, to say nothing of the first glimpse of an electronic parallel universe not too long after that.

Bley was involved in a remarkable number of these events, as much insurrectionary as experimental, so in his late years it's perhaps reasonable to see him as one of the sponsors of a freed musical world where he's entitled to visit at will. Within this sense, he doesn't have the narrow 'repertoire' of so many musicians so much as a range of repertorial foci, always available for renewal on a still exploratory basis.

So though it's true one can entertain doubts about *Belop* – less to do with Bley than his accompanists, as Steve Lake pointed out – there's less to get picky about here.

Bley and Peacock first recorded together years ago – and indeed to see them playing sets drawn from this series of duets and solos is like old friends meeting again and taking up exactly where they left off, though with that added layer of maturity and wisdom that we'd all like eventually to achieve. Particularly notable, maybe because he hasn't had



the consistently high recording profile that Bley has achieved, is the bassist's work: a glorious sound, a great technique and the ability to concentrate ideas around a central point of reference in solo work as well as get right into Bley's mind in the duets. For the first, hear the devastating "Workin'ot" or the sublime "Sanyr Sanyr", for the second the complexity and suspense of "Hand In Hand"

About Bley's own work it becomes difficult to find words, but even superlatives don't convey the intensity of thought and choice that goes into his music. Sit close to him, as I did when I saw them playing in Paris at the end of last October, and you can see his fingers, in the midst of either simple or complex passages, twitching over the keys, this note? that note?, before he actually strikes it.

Live, Bley and Peacock played their sets long and extravagantly generous. Here, the lengthy "Who's Who Is It?" makes some of this clear, whilst their lolling reading of Ornette's "Latin Genetics" conveys something of the sense of sheer enjoyment inherent in this music. The disc is otherwise condensed, though there's still the sense of flow that's communicated, with all its rapt concentration.

Finding Owl's products is not the easiest of tasks, I know, but if you get the chance, take it. You won't regret it.

JACK COOKE

## PAUL MOTIAN



### Bill Evans

JMT 834 445 CD/LP/HC

*Show-Type Tune, Turn Out The Stars, Walkin' Up, Very Early, Five, Time Remembered, 34 Skidoo, Re Person I Know, Children's Play Song*  
Joe Lovano (ts), Bill Fissell (g), Marc Johnson (b), Paul Motian (d). Rec May 1990

BILL EVANS' first and finest drummer and his last bass-player join forces with two sympathisers to commemorate the tenth anniversary of his death. The anniversary is a sad one, but this is a joyful, not a mournful tribute. With it, Paul Motian brings together the work of his own youth and maturity in a masterpiece that sums up a career.

Maybe it shouldn't be surprising how contemporary many of Evans's compositions sound here. The anagrammatic "Re Person I Know", over Paul Motian's slow shuffle, is transformed into something you might at first listen take as a Bill Fissell original, "Five" runs into free-form between statement and reprise. These examples are the most extreme; love and respect for the originals are always there. The real strength and originality of Bill Evans's playing, and composing, was sometimes veiled by a diffidence, and a genuine unease with up-tempo. On Paul Motian's tribute, there's a *slowly* to "34 Skidoo", "Walkin' Up" and "Five" that's quite unexpected.

That quality is often down to Joe Lovano, who reaffirms the promise of recent albums with interpretations of real character. On



"Show-Type Tune" he comes bursting out of the ensemble like a latter-day Allen Eager. In contrast, the beauties of what is almost Evans's theme-song, "Turn Out The Stars", are tenderly explored. A great song, but so sad; the final dying fall is almost unbearably poignant.

Fissell's electronically-enhanced vibrato, especially on the ballad numbers, is a trademark quirk. Bill Evans's tunes were about clarity, and that's not the aim of his namesake's blurred stylings. But with this most original of guitarists you buy, and admire, the whole package. And it's a mark of great compositions that they sound fresh played in other styles, other combinations. Which brings us to the absence of a pianist on this Evans tribute. It's apt, because which of the post-Evans stylists could really fit the

bill? The result is in any case an artistic triumph.

Despite the claims of two musicians interviewed in *Wired* 77 and 82/3, the sleeve-note is right to present Evans as "the greatest post-bop pianist". There are many Bill Evans copyists, but only one Bill Evans. His depth and genius discloses itself slowly; the loss is felt more keenly as the anniversaries recede. Can it really be ten years?

ANDY HAMILTON

## JACK NITZSCHE



### The Hot Spot

Antilles 422-844 813 CD

*Coming To Town, Empty Bank, Harry's Philosophy, Dolly's Arsenal, Harry And Dolly, Sawmill, Bank Robbery, Monks, Gloria's Story, Harry Set Up Sister, Marler, Blackmail, East Coast*  
Miles Davis (d), John Lee Hooker (g, v), Roy Rogers (g), Tai Mahal (g, v), Bradford Ellis (ky), Tim Drummond (b), Earl Palmer (d). Rec. Hollywood, 1960

JACK NITZSCHE can call on heavy friends. Given his first break by Sonny Bono (of Sonny & Cher), Nitzsche helped Phil Spector create his Wall of Sound on the Philles label, working on such harbingers of hysterical pop as Tina Turner's "River Deep, Mountain High" and The Crystals' "He's A Rebel". In 1963, 26 of his arrangements charted. Later he played keyboards for both the Rolling Stones and Neil Young. He scored the films *Performance*, *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* and *Blue Collar*.

For Denzau Hopper's *The Hot Spot* - billed as "film noir like you've never seen" - Nitzsche has recruited Miles Davis and John Lee Hooker, the most inextinguishably down-home, gutter-scrubbing proponent of amplified guitar blues. Hooker is notoriously hard to accompany (he is so goddamned lowdown he seldom sticks to 12-bar formats) but Earl Palmer, Philles label house drummer in the 60s, manages to keep a heavy, simple blues thump that packs the heady rush of hemp smoke. "Bank Robbery", a pounding train-tune blues, has bassist Tim Drummond hitting a tremulous three-note riff, the notes flexing like muscles. Hooker's guitar has an expressive depth of sound that makes fusion guitar sound anorexic, curling and burning



and spitting with splintered anger. One hell of a rhythm section.

Over this blues boogie – caught in shimmering digital – Miles scribbles with his customary knife-edge nonchalance, bringing up the tension with the frosty, hung blue notes of the "Sear People" solo, concluding his solos with a resigned logic that tears the heart.

Of course that is Miles being Miles: whether it was the claustrophobic sophistication of the *Birth Of The Cool* sessions, the new open pop of the quintet with Coltrane, Gil Evans's light-music concoctions, the rock-funk of *Butcher Brew* or – most recently – Mulgrew Miller's synth-soul, his trumpet sound has always floated uninvolved, a cameo of alienation.

After 40 minutes it palls. The music keeps rubbing the same spot, like sex that never comes. You miss BB King's emotional peaks, Muddy Waters's get-up-and-use-me danceability. Still, it's a great sound – undistanced except perhaps in the strategies of *Blat Collar* – and that is what a soundtrack needs to deliver.

REN WATSON

## MANHATTAN PROJECTS



### *Dreamboat*

Timeless SP 127 CD

*Dream Boat*, *Capetown Ansoob*, *Minty*, *Daph*, *I Remember Clifford*, *The Sacrifice*, *Sometime My Prince Will Come*, *I Didn't Know What Time It Was*, *Alluding To*.

Roy Hargrove (tr), Kenny Garrett (sa, as, ts), Donald Brown (p), Ira Coleman (b); Carl Allen (dr).  
Rec. 24–25 March 1989.

## GARY THOMAS



### *While The Gate Is Open*

JMT 83449 CD

*Strode Rode*, *Star Eyes*, *You Sapped Out Of A Dream*, *The Song Is You*, *Invitation*, *Chelvia Bridge*, *On The Trail*, *Epistrophe*.

Gary Thomas (tr), Kevin Eubanks (g), Renee Rosnes (p, synth), Dave Holland, Anthony Cox (b), Dennis Chambers (d). Collective personnel.  
Rec. May 1990.

MANY OPPONENTS of free improvised music

exercise their minds over the musicians' grasp of the rudiments. It's an irrelevant concern – if you can't hear "Cat's Flux 2" or "Virginal/Praxis" it matters not at all whether Evan Parker or Derek Bailey can play "I Got Rhythm" in all the 24 – but it's the mirror of the trap I fall into when faced with the smooth, anti-perspirant product which earns the likes of Kenny Garrett and Kevin Eubanks their living. Knowing that Garrett and Eubanks can play as well as they do on these two albums doesn't make, say, "Prisoner Of Love" or "The Heat Of Heat" sound any better, but it does raise my evaluation of them as musicians a couple of notches.

The choice of material is interesting on both of these sets, although in the case of the Timeless album most of the standards were



chosen by the producers rather than the players. There are several old warhorses which have been out to grass for a few years but now, pressed back into service, they prove that they are still capable of supporting worthwhile improvisations. The repertoire used by Gary Thomas would be far from inimical to Sonny Rollins – indeed, he has tried most of it out before now and, of course, wrote "Strode Rode", part of the legendary *Saxophone Colossus* album – but there is less of Newk than of Shorter and Henderson in his playing.

Thomas and Garrett played alongside each other in one of Miles Davis's least disappointing touring bands of the last five years. When they played London Garrett had the edge, but here Thomas wins on points. His full-toned tenor, turning to vinegar on occa-

sion, powers through the programme supported by various permutations from the full personnel; "Epistrophe" is played by a quintet (Cox on bass) but elsewhere at least one musician lays out. Cox also appears on "The Song Is You", "Invitation" and "On The Trail" and Holland is on all the other tracks. Everyone plays extremely well and the whole set is consistently stimulating.

Garrett's work with Miles was entertaining and enjoyable, but there's more substance to his playing on the Manhattan Projects session. His alto has a strong whiff of Cannonball on some of the pieces, and he and Hargrove make a fine team. Hargrove is a clear-toned, to-the-point trumpeter, equally admirable on standard ballad or fast-moving originals such as his own tune "Depth". Carl Allen, no klutz on the traps, is a very useful composer the elegant "Dream Boat" is his, as are "Alluding To" and "The Sacrifice", two convincing chunks of tough-bop.

Seventeen reasons to be cheerful, and that's a nice thought for '91. *Dreamboat* is Allen's recorded debut, and not the least of its several virtues is the way that he, despite being the drummer and leader, exercises commendable restraint, providing imaginative support throughout.

BARRY WITHERDEN

## MISHA MENGELBERG



### *Impromptus*

PNP 7 CD

*Impromptus No's 1–11*.  
Mengelberg (p, v). Rec. 4 June 1988.

*IMPROMPTUS* – A Romantic title. Short, casual, improvisatory pieces in song-like form, the best-known being Schubert's op 90 and op 142. There's little hint of *Biedermeier* Vienna in Misha's little pieces though; I'd almost call this set Mengelberg's Diabelli Variations, if I could be sure the tune heard at the start forms a basis for them all.

That memorable tune is first heard through the medium of Misha's vocalising ("singing" isn't quite the right term) – a hymn or chorale, though the middle but speeded up sounds like a Messengers' number. It gets a Bachian contrapuntal treatment in "Impromptus" no 3, then it's inside the





piano on no 4. The tune creeps back in the plangent no 11. There are more shades of the baroque in no 7, and later, in a crazy, drunken way, in no 10. Classical allusion is recurrent. The final and longest piece begins like the darkest of Busoni, but ends melodically, pettily, jazily.

The piano puts a lot of mechanism between the idea and the expression, and it seems it's the prerogative of pianistic elder statesmen that they're allowed to howl, moan, whistle and groan to try and recapture the vocal wellsprings of their musical creation. Cecil Taylor still does, George Crumb asked for it in his *Makrokosmos*, and now Mengelberg displays his own vocal skills (or lack of them). I'm not sure it's the best direction for his musical brilliance.

Misha is very clever player in the best senses of the term. It's hard to tell with such a subversive, anarchistic wit where his real musical feelings lie. But I reckon there's real nostalgia here – maybe some of Schoenberg's nostalgia for a time when form and tonality were certainties. Misha belongs to the *ex nihilo* school of Romantic improvisers – not for him the "search for one's own sound and style", the honing and repetition of favourite licks that achieve identity at the expense of spontaneity. But he preserves a wistful regard for song-form in his very melodic free improvisations, and of course he has a pianistic identity as well as the closest you can get to unconstrained invention. As the ubiquitous Steve Lake writes in his sleeve-note: "Misha Mengelberg am Klavier. Geschäft wie üblich". I'm still humming that tune.

ANDY HAMILTON

## CHRIS BURN'S ENSEMBLE



### Chris Burn's Ensemble

Acta Records ACTA 5 CD

*Influences And Conclusions, Funforall, Korg Boyle And The Four Duarses, Frisole Tams: Hang-On, Natchatch Forge, Up's Amst, A Must In Silk*  
Jim Denley (fl), John Butcher (ss, ts), Steve Wishart (vn, hurdy-gurdy), Phil Durrant (vcl), Mucio Martis (cl), John Russell (g), Chris Burn (p), Matt Hutchinson (syn) Rec 11–12 August 1990

HALF OF these pieces are planned, but freely improvised or not, the musicians give each

other a lot of space. At first, the bouquets of instrumental colour are quite intoxicating, there seems to be so much to listen to. It is difficult to credit the wide variety of sounds that can issue forth from stringed instruments.

Jim Denley's flute is particularly full of impact – big breath shards, splintered squeaks, a sense of pressure and effort. He solos, then the ensemble blossoms into a range of sounds like the innards of the green boxes British Telecom personnel attend to. Everyone is listening very hard.

However, over the course of the 64-minute CD, the music stops sounding so attractive. Bright pipping electronics, scratching violins, scabbled cello bowing, everyone seems to be hiding in dithering extremities. You long for someone to dare to

content with accidental prettiness. They show a self-regarding satisfaction with whatever is played at any moment. There is too much mutual "appreciation" going on. Abstract music plays for high stakes: if it is not truly transformative and necessary it becomes merely punishing and pretentious. By the end, I thought I had become someone who does not like improvisation: not something to be grateful for

BEN WATSON

## GARY BARTZ



### West 42nd Street

Candid CCD70649 CD

*West 42nd Street, Spunk Love, It's Easy To Remember, Cousins, The Night Has A Thousand Eyes*

Claudio Rodin (t, flht), Gary Bartz (ss, as), John Hicks (p), Ray Drummond (b), Al Foster (d) Rec 31 March 1990

## COSMO INTINI JAZZ SET



### My Favourite Roots

Timeless SMP 339 CD

*When Saxony Gave Blax, Powerful Warrior, Round Madrugá, Fatherly Love, My One And Only Love, Sisy*

Paulo Fresu (t, flht), Gary Bartz (ss, as), Intini (p), Carole Dushell (b), Victor Lewis (d) Rec 16 May 1989

THESE DAYS it's less effort to indicate albums whose participants *have* worked with Miles Davis and/or Art Blakey. The CVs here show both (Bartz), Blakey (Hicks), Davis (Foster), whilst Fresu has done some serious listening and could creditably stand in for Davis.

Fresu and Intini are on the roster of impressive Italian musicians who established themselves during the 80s. As the decade progressed Intini, starting as a classical player, has concentrated increasingly on jazz, and on the evidence of *My Favourite Roots* this was a sensible move. He has produced a very fine album, much the sort of thing we have come to expect from La Nuova Onda. Intini's own playing is spare and controlled, the band is well-balanced and integrated, the material is well-chosen and programmed (with two Intini originals, "Powerful Warrior" and "Fatherly Love") and the session is recorded



say something. Chris Burn applies some rattling irrationalist piano out of Canlon Nancarrow and everyone recoils like frightened pigeons. This "avantgarde" insistence on scattered events sounds like an evocation of memories of Webern, Scelsi and Braxton rather than a process with its own logic.

John Russell adopts Derek Bailey's denial of guitar sound without realising his harmonic critique: Chris Burn's key changes on "Nutchatch Forge" are merely banal. On the other hand, the shortest piece, "Hang On", is an explosive phantasmagoria with real impact. Maybe shearing off some of the portentous scratching with zenore concentration could pay dividends.

Many of these musicians have played terrific music in other circumstances. The musicians seem to want an utterness, yet rest



with a nice presence.

The opener, "When Sunny Gets Blue", is given a sensitive interpretation, Intini keeping a tight rein on the tempo without losing the momentum. Bartz adds a sharper edge, as he does during the otherwise languid "Easy To Remember" on his own album. Fresu, who appears on "Sunny" and "Fatherly Love" only, begins the track with solo muted horn, then alternates with Bartz in the presentation of the theme. When his solo arrives it is a subdued, late-night reflection on the song, full of characteristic melancholy, but a melancholy free of despondency. Bartz is good value throughout, and is at his most typically wailing best on the forceful "Warrior". Chuck Corea's "Steps" (very like Tubby Hayes's "Mexican Green" methinks) is an up-tempo piece with nimble solos from the leader and Dashiell, who provides a strong centre right through this highly satisfying set.

The Bartz record is a roller-coaster live session. Even on "Easy To Remember", which gets a largely romantic reading, the saxophonist turns up the heat as his solo develops. Roditi lays out on this sentimental but uncluttered number.

"Speak Low" and "1000 Eyes" would occupy a whole LP side each. I'm a grudging convert to CDs, but with such an excellent set it's nice to have all this and three more tracks too. "Remember" has Bartz building his seven-minute solo by progressively intensifying the sense of pulse and stepping up the tempo without letting it canter off. All the other tracks lack such inhibition, keeping the tempo brisk and the temperature high. This session was recorded live at Birdland and I wish I'd been there.

HARRY WITHERDEN

# RENEE ROSNES



*For The Moment*

Blue Note 9459 CD

*Summer Night; For The Moment; Four In One; Malaga Moon; Nemaun; Thinking To Myself; The Organ Grinder; Hinescard*

Steve Wilson (ss, as), Joe Henderson (ts), Renee Rosnes (p), Ira Coleman (b), Billy Drummond (d). Rec: 15 & 16 February 1990

FOLLOWING HARD on the heels of her CV-

like debut, *For The Moment* gives us a more distilled essence of Renee Rosnes's craft. Although the Canadian keyboardist has proved amply that she can "do everything" she seems most at home in the melodic and lyrical vein of pianists such as Tommy Flanagan and Cedar Walton. Her gifts are in the service of a neo-bop, as opposed to a "contemporary" kind of beauty. That is not to say her playing lacks warmth, from the opening chords of "Summer Night" you are enveloped in rich voicings and sympathetic phrasing. The inclusion of Joe Henderson (with whom she has worked before) adds enormously to the sense of communication in evidence, both within the band and between the music and the listener. As the number kicks into a bright swing, the leader is audibly in her element, the right hand following the



changes with a light but sure touch.

"For The Moment", a balladic ostinato, draws back the curtain even further on the Romantic Impressionist: Steve Wilson sketches his solo with a thin, soprano pencil line. Henderson's mark is wider and deeper, starting ominously in the lower register, he gives the piece a more abstract design. Billy Drummond is excellent here, his cymbals constantly calling the ear, the snare picking up unexpected off-beats, supporting Rosnes in a passionate crescendo before letting her down again in quiet contemplation. "Malaga Moon" and "Homeward" present a broadly similar mood of relaxed rhapsody which, however, remains supple and concise throughout.

Of the more up-tempo selections ("The Organ Grinder", "Nemesis" and "Four In

One"), Monk's "Four In One" is perhaps the most interesting. Monk's music tends to bury the mediocre and bring out the best of worthier proponents. Rosnes is definitely in the latter category. She manages to pay her respects without sacrificing her essentially cheerful nature, but there is an added sense of adventurousness that hopefully will be explored in the future.

ROLAND RAMANAN

# THE LONDON CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



*Minimalist*

Virgin Classics VC 791148 CD/MC/LP

John Adams *Shaker Loops*, Philip Glass *Façades*, Company, Steve Reich *Eight Lines*, Dave Heath *The Frontier*.

The London Chamber Orchestra, Christopher Warren-Green (dir). Rec. 1, 4 & 5 March 1990

# PIANO CIRCUS



*Steve Reich/Terry Riley*

Argo 430386 CD/MC

Steve Reich *Six Pianos*, Terry Riley *In C*, Kirsteen Davidson-Kelly, Richard Harris, Kate Heath, Max Richter, Ginny Strawson, John Wood (p). Rec. no date

# MICHAEL TORKE



*Vanada, etc.*

Argo 430389 CD/MC

*The Yellow Pages; Slats; Adjustable Wrench; Vanada; Rust*

The London Sinfonietta, Torke, Edmund Niemann, Nurit Tilles (p), James Pughese (xy), Gary Schall (mrn), Kent Nagano, David Niller (cond). Rec 9-13 November 1989

It's ALL happening for the chirpy meta-modernists. Sort of. The first two of these recordings are a dead giveaway insofar as most of the music has already been released by other players on other labels. This seems to be a trend. My first reaction to such releases is always exasperation, as there's plenty of new new music which I'd like to be able to listen to. However, old new music



seems to predominate here. I mean, we're talking repertoire. Or perhaps it's all we deserve; campaign for a music's acceptance and it gets accepted, eventually, sometimes; but the inevitable time lag seems to mean that such music can either be genuinely contemporary or widely accepted, but not both.

Sell, never mind. The LCO, driven as it is by snappy presentation and a James Last performance aesthetic, has a legitimate enough case for fitting a rendering of minimalist favourites into their Virgin Classics series, which sets out to present the LCO rather than the composers whose music they play as the defining theme in their approach. Name-above-the-title, very Nige Looking at this CD from the point of view of the devotee, though, do we need another recording of "Shaker Loops"? Hell, no: there's a nice one on Philips and a duff one on New Albion "Facades"? Nah - we've all got *Glasnost*. "Eight Lines"? Nope. So we've got a goodly proportion of tried and tested material and one attractive piece commissioned from the young Englishman Dave Heath. A few years ago, any of the senior minimalists represented on this recording could have occupied the token-new-boy slot.

So then, let's say that what we have here is perhaps an introduction to nice minimalism (as opposed to the cold-shower minimalism of, for example, the early, Chatham Square-era Glass) for the benefit of those who are less than entirely fascinated by the concept of minimalism as a whole. And as such, it's fine, superbly recorded, if a little self-conscious in conception and excursion (the sleeve-notes tell us that the members of the orchestra stand up when they play - ooh!) and well-produced. Makes ideal gift, collect the set etc.

The re-launch of Decca's Argo label has resulted in a pretty eclectic assortment of releases. The press release defines the label's specialisms as choral, organ, British and American music. Well, it would make a nice Venn diagram, but the two releases under scrutiny here only fit into the American set.

Piano Circus offer us a vigorous rendering of Reich's already vigorous "Six Pianos". The piano always lends itself to multiplication, whether of hands or instruments, and this group capture Reich's mastery of internalised tension and sublimation-rather-than-

resolution with what can only be described as glee. Their interpretation of Riley's "In C" is, however, a bit of a dog. The importation of a Rhodes, a vibraphone and two harpsichords into the instrumentation fails to disguise the fact that the players have more freedom than they know what to do with in this very loosely specified composition. Forgivable, though, I'd love to hear them tackle Michael Nyman's "The Otherwise Very Beautiful Blue Danube".

Staying with Argo for what is in all fairness very new new music, I've yet to come to a proper conclusion about Michael Torke. Proposed as representing "the voice of a new generation", Torke's music strangely contradicts its origins. In the sleeve-notes, Mark Swed (him again) drops names furiously: Stravinsky, Glass, Madonna, Ives, Bernstein,



Bolcom, Chaka Khan and Andy Warhol are called up either as sources or influences or as examples of people whom Torke is unlike. Well, he fails to mention Reich or Copland, and for me Torke's music sounds like an attempt to imitate the drive of the former with the jollity of the latter. Yet despite all this input, the five chamber pieces offered on this CD have a strangely incoherent, almost neurotic quality. Sparse and jumpy melodies are scattered across the kind of dogged rhythmic figures beloved of Rhys Chatham, yet at the same time Torke seems to affect a morbid reluctance to move from one note to the next. This young American composer has been much touted as a next big thing and he's certainly worth watching. But his style seems a little tentative for my tastes.

TOM CORBIN

## DAVE FOWLER- GRAHAM CLARK TRIO



### As It Was

DMF HC

*Arran, Landscape, Deep Waters, X, As You Were, The Deadly Embrace, A Game, Y, A Miracle, Journey's End*  
Dave Fowler (d), Graham Clark (vn), Jon Lloyd (ss, ss, kalimba). Rec 16 October 1988 and 21 January 1989.

## THE TRIO



### The Trio

Extempore HC

*Current, Am, Time Zones, Taxi On The Moon, Important Shadows, Finding The Tone, Flux, Ackers, New Residential*  
Paul Baylis (as, cl), Gus Garside (b), Jim LeBague (d). Rec 2 March 1990.

THE INCREASING popularity of the cassette format for much of the most vital new British music has taken place less for any love of *avant-garde*-style production than as a response to the music's utter marginalisation. It is further evidence that, despite all the still-fashionable jazz-revival hype, the economic infrastructure of creative and improvised music is more under threat now than at any time in its quarter-century history. Somehow the music carries on, though; changing, developing and getting better. Under these circumstances I can't help feeling that a lot of people would be very surprised by the sheer quality of these two cassettes.

The Trio tape features improvisations based around a free-boppy approach with collective interaction and purpose whose intimacy more than superficially recalls both Ornette Coleman's acoustic groups and the Spontaneous Music Ensemble; alto-saxophonist Baylis, bassist Garside and drummer Jim LeBague following each other's every move. Baylis is a very creative altoist developing his own melodic voice from within the Coleman tradition, and a real breath of fresh air after all the second- and third-rare Coltrane-speakers that continue to swamp every other jazz recording that appears. Nicely recorded and produced, though the tape could be longer.

The Fowler-Clark trio take a more cosmo-



politan approach on their very self-assured recording. Graham Clark's and Jon Lloyd's distinctive and individual violin and saxophone patterns stretch, shape and congeal amidst Dave Fowler's remarkably melodic and conversational rhythm-making, he is as fluent and as original as any drummer of his generation. Folk, 'classical' and jazz-derived elements all appear and disappear, but where the elements come from is less important than the way they are employed and united into a very pure and refined improvisational music. I like it best when they play as a trio, as some of the duets get uncomfortably close to virtuosity without purpose. *At It Was* would not sound at all out of place amongst the best of ECM's catalogue, though the production here is more clean and direct. Some of the editing is odd, "Y", for example, being pointlessly short.

Amidst all the hype and nostalgia here are two groups of younger players that are still very much alive and kicking and are imbuing their music with real creative energy.

RICHARD SCOTT

*The Trio* is available from Extempo Records and Tapes, 5 Catharine Road, Forest Hill, London SE23. Price £5, cheques etc., to Paul Baylis. *At It Was* is available from DMF Music, 4 Fitzgerald House, 169 East India Dock Road, London E14. Price £5.

# WES MONTGOMERY



## Far Wes

Pacific Jazz 94475 CD/LP

*Far Wes, Lulu, Old Folks, Wes' Tune, Hymn (to Carl, Montgomeryland Fable, Skopos)* At The Savoy, Monk's Shop, Summertime, Falling In Love With Love, Remo

Wes Montgomery (g), Harold Land (ts) (tracks 1-7), Pony Pondexter (as) (tracks 8-11), Buddy Montgomery (g), Monk Montgomery (b), Tony Bailey (d) (1-7), Louis Hayes (d) (8-11). Rec April 1958 (1-7), October 1959 (8-11).

# GRANT GREEN



## Matador

Blue Note 84442 CD/LP

*Matador, My Favorite Things, Green Jam, Bolshoi, Wines And Lovers*

Grant Green (g), McCoy Tyner (p), Bob Cranshaw (b), Elvin Jones (d). Rec 20 May 1965

DISCUSSION of Montgomery has tended to revolve around areas of technique and tone, making it easy to forget that he was also a great writer of tunes. So it's good to see a higher-than-usual proportion of Montgomery originals among these early recordings you won't find many more hummable bop tunes than "Far Wes" or "Wes' Tune" anywhere. The other bonus is the chance to hear him in a fairly conventional quartet setting (although brother Monk plays electric bass throughout) rather than with his more fully documented organ trio.

The 1958 session is clearly the stronger of the two, it's thoroughly relaxed in both atmosphere and tempo, but the effect, far



from inducing a foot-tapping tempo, is to focus attention on the ceaseless alertness of both Montgomery and Land. What soon becomes apparent is that the latter, while fluid and eloquent as ever, has a tendency to move off into areas of his own, much more so than Montgomery whose solos always stay rooted in the thematic material: this is most magnificently evident towards the end of "Old Folks", where those famous thickening octaves shade seamlessly into a coda made up of tender chords and rapid single-note runs.

The Grant Green album inhabits a much edgier environment. It's only five years later but a lot has happened, including the Coltrane quartet from which Green borrows half of his line-up. The stab at "My Favorite Things" is therefore brave but ill-advised: the guitarist's attempt to work himself up to a

Coltrane-like intensity collapses into repetition and mannerism. But at its lightest and most melodic this was a terrific group, and again it's the originals which prove outstanding. "Green Jeans" offers a tricky, open-ended melody which provokes Tyner into some lovely modal inventions, while Green's blend of tough phrasing and unexpectedly dainty tunefulness leaves one wondering why his reputation doesn't stand higher. Two very worthwhile resurrections.

JONATHAN COE

# ERICA LINDSAY



## Dreamer

Candid 79940 CD/LP

*First Movement, Day Dream, Walking Together, Dreamer, At The Last Moment, Graffiti* Erica Lindsay (s), Howard Johnson (bs, bc, fg, penny whistle), Francesa Tanksley (p), Anchoy Cox (b), Newman Baker (d), Robin Eubanks (tb on Day Dream). Rec 3-5 March 1989

This is Lindsay's first recording, either as leader or sideman. She can play soprano, alto, clarinet and flute but sticks to tenor on this session. She has a pleasing tone, which she seems to be careful to maintain throughout the tenor's range. The concern with texture that this implies is reflected in her writing.

Apart from Ellington and Strayhorn's "Day Dream", all the pieces on the record were written and arranged by her. She composes well-shaped tunes which she and the other members of the band have due regard for in the improvisations. A lot of jazz tunes are - indeed always have been - mere pump-primers which set off solos that could just as easily have been improvised by a list of chords. It's nice to hear a composition actually being used.

Francesca Tanksley, who has done good work with Billy Harper's band, is on excellent form. Her attack is light, but far from insubstantial. Howard Johnson, whether playing remarkably airy rubs, lush baritone or funky penny whistle, is a dependable centre for the band. Newman Baker (who has also worked with Billy Harper) is a supple and animated drummer whose crisp, quicksilver work is well captured by the recording. As so often happens these days when the



quality of sound impresses to an unusual extent, a glance at the credits confirms that David Baker was the engineer and coproducer.

Without being dully academic Erica Lindsay's playing sounds thoughtful, carefully constructed in all departments. The music on *Dreamer* is never incontinentally exciting, but it consistently maintained my interest. Not unlike Wayne Shorter, Lindsay is an admirable tenor player but I would expect her to achieve a reputation as a writer (and, no doubt, bandleader) regardless of her playing abilities.

BARRY WITHERDEN

# FRED FRITH

★

## Step Across The Border: Music For The Film

Rec/Rec 30 LP

*Sparrow Song, Voice Of America Pt 3, Selloid Restaurant/The Old Man Patti Oat The Fire, After Dreamer, Houston Street, Dream Factory, Regardless Of Rain, Candy Machine, Romanach's Cafe, The Border, Nirvana Again, Scottish Rapping, Norwegian Nyls, Bird, The At Usual Dance Towards The Other Flight To What Is Not (Pt 3), Williamsburg Bridge, Same Old Williamsburg Bridge Reprise, The At Usual Dance Towards The Other Flight To What Is Not Pt 5, Last And Found, Nine By Nine, Evolution, Union Square, Morning Song, Voice Of America (Pt 4), Too Much Too Little, Too Late.*

Jean Derome, John Zorn (as), Tim Hodgkinson (bcl), Fred Frith (vn, g, ky, b, perc, d, v, bottles, home-mades, "r"), Ira Bittova (vn, v), Tom Cora (clo, d, v), Eino Hualpa (g), Pavel Fajt (g, v, beer cans), Haco (p, v), Lasse Holmler (ky), Zeena Parkins (ky, d, v), Bob Osterag (syn, tps, samples), Tina Couran, Bill Laswell, René Lusier (b), Hans Branniusson, Eteretu Hayashi, Fred Maher, Kevin Norton (cl), Daihachi Oguchi (d factory) Collective personnel Rec 1979 to 1989

So who decides who matters? (*Me - Ed*) And how? There's a dozen rival ways of measuring value. None of them could possibly ever apply universally again. So that significance is forever sundered from talent, and popularity; and just deserts; and even - paradoxically - from importance (if this is taken to imply Objective Perspective). Someone's star suddenly rises and found meanings flood in. Someone else's stays sullenly below the horizon, chance marginality starts to be read as the mark of inevitable irrelevance.

Frith - who has sometimes been seen as a

man that time and the critics were passing by - is from now on about far more than merely walfal narrowness, or restless rootlessness, or whatever. This is one of the records that illuminates that process, at the same time as it retrieves much of his work to date, retroactively making wrong turns right and bad choices good. The fact is, even his resoundingly dud pop songs - such as "Sparrow Song" (which opens side one) - suddenly sound great. Before, the very same songs were so much avant-dabbling. What's changed?

Well, it's partly because Nicolas Humbert and Werner Penzel came along, not to make a film about him so much as make a film of him, of who he is and what he does. Random sounds and scribbly improvisations and complex structures all take on new potency -



from being soundtrack to someone else's film, and then (back to this LP) from not being again (you don't have to have seen the film - you just have to have thought about there having been one).

There's a possible future for everything he's done: because it at last no longer cuts itself off from chance interaction with the world. "Too Much Too Little" was quite bafflingly pointless when it appeared on *Cheap At Half The Price* in 1983 (his "sell-out", as he wryly describes it) but the curious little stamping dance two old New Yorkers are performing to keep warm waiting for the B-team, which it provides a soundtrack to that they never heard, makes it suddenly desperately poignant (OK, for this you *did* have to see the film - but it was a case that needed extreme measures).

All Frith's double-edged strategies make sense here, use/abuse of technology, his collaborations with and refusals of the soundtrack sensibility, and with the tensions between form and freedom, surprise and familiarity, luck and plans, integrity and variety, lyrical drift and noisy dreams (*batterre*, as the French say), mini-traditions and micro-revolutions. These stopped being the irreconcilable polar opposites the world - you and I - took them to be, became not just complementary ingredients, necessary for the sense he'd always been trying to make, but the ground he was walking on. This isn't a minor obsession or an obscure line of experiments any more - it's a profession, for everyone. Meanings flood in.

A retrospective framed by a decade is always also a recuperation dominated by Pop Strategy (master strategists/polar opposites Zorn 'n' Laswell are crucial to Frith's post-UK development, note also that New York and Tokyo have provided venues for it). This should be more often celebrated than denigrated, frankly: it allows music to separate, in curious and fugitive ways, from things that get in its way (like Authorship and Intention and Content and Control and Craftsmanship and Artistic Worth).

Pop Strategy can give what it touches a voracious ignorance about market limits and trade-barriers and sell-by-dates and every kind of genre or class or value distinction. If you let it. At which point it reaches more than just your crones. So that the most moving moment here is "Houston Street", an open-hearted fake jazz-noir duet with Zorn. Frith started off wanting to be the Beatles, and left the UK a shell-shocked X-Ray Specs victim. The problem was, he knew too much not to bridle at all the things that went along with being Pop or Punk or Jazz. Now he knows more. He also knows better.

MARK SINKER

# GATO BARBIERI

★

## Movie Music By P Umlauts, 1965/8

Little Records LRS 0043/2 CD

*Una Bella Gesta, Ballata Della Bella Padana, Lontana E Segue, Free Theor, Ballata Della Bella Padana, Hammond Blues*  
Enrico Rava (cl), Barbara (ts), Franco D'Andrea (p,



org), Giovanni Tommaso (b), Bruno Biondo (d).  
Rec: 1965

*Slop Now Little One, Salitudine* (two versions), *Prato*  
*Bianco Nova, Fra In Mente, Salitudine* (two more  
versions), *Sotto il Tullone*,  
Barbieri (ts), Antonello Vannucci (org, vib), Enao  
Grilli (g), Giovanni Tommaso (b), Bruno Biondo  
(d) Rec: 1968

## CHET BAKER



### Movie Music By P Umiliani

Luto Records LAS 0063/1 CD

*Imprevvisando In Blasi, Materazzazione, Furtiva Morte*,  
Baker (tr), Lino Cervellini (ts), Marcello Boschi  
(as), Guio Mannucci (bs), Enzo Grillini (g), Franco  
Chian (vb), Piero Umiliani (pb), Berto Pisano (b),  
Ralf Ferraro (d) Rec: 1958  
*Relaxing With Chet, I Solisti Ignati, Tension, Alive In*  
*A Crowd, Temo d'Amore*  
Baker, Nino Rosso (tr), Bill Gilmore (tb), Jimmy  
Pratt (d), with Boschi, Cervellini, Mannucci,  
Umiliani, Pisano. Rec: 1961.

*Sing, Twilight At Los Angeles, Thinking Blues*  
Chet Baker, Piero Umiliani Big Band (with  
strings) Rec: 1962

HIRING OUT for film-score work is a little  
like doing voice-overs for TV commercials.  
In both cases, it is precisely your voice that  
they're after, as distinctively inflected as  
possible (which is why John Hurt and Tom  
Baker don't do that much acting any more),  
but emptied out of all but the most utilitarian  
expressiveness. Where commercial actors  
sell a product, movie scores sell a mood.

Barbieri has very nearly cornered the market  
in a particular kind of swoony tenor  
noodling. *Last Tango In Paris* was a lucky  
break for him in that its canoodlings were  
sufficiently rugged to allow him to hint at  
that fierce upper-register vein which made  
him such a strong solo voice in the late 60s  
and mid 70s. Originally, Barbieri asked his  
Italian friend and sometime collaborator  
Piero Umiliani to do the arrangements for  
*Last Tango*. After a while, though, the phone  
stopped ringing and Umiliani learned that  
the Argentinian had hired Oliver Nelson  
instead.

The first of these two discs, then, is a kind  
of genteel revenge. In his sleeve note Umiliani  
makes the very pertinent point (if I follow his  
slightly tortured English) that the Bertolucci

movie was a success for Barbieri the player,  
rather than for Barbieri the composer. What  
it did was to establish him as a disembodied  
voice. On these tracks, Barbieri emerges as a  
player of formidable intelligence severely  
constrained by uninspired charts, but  
nonetheless, as in the leitmotif "Solitudine",  
able to transcend even the limitations of a  
particular composition by concentrating on a  
myriad variations of enunciation and delivery.  
He does very much the same thing on  
Nelson's *Swiss Suite*, though there the subtlety  
of his performance is somewhat camouflaged  
by his over-reaching.

It's hard to credit that the *Una Bella*  
*Grinta* score (did they really make a film  
called *A Beautiful Swirl*?) was cut within  
months of Barbieri's legendary Christmas  
Eve *Complete Companion* with Don Cherry. Ed

neutrally passive exercise in styling. Miles  
learned a lot from applying himself to Malle's  
remarkably static revision of the standard  
polser and devised a means of playing powerful  
jazz with little discernible harmonic  
direction. Barbieri and Baker may have  
learned some dim economic lesson from the  
experience but, then, the films were less  
compelling and the company a lot less stimulating.

BRIAN MORTON

## MICHAEL FINNISSY



### English Country-Tunes

Ecotone KTC 1091 CD

*Green Meadows, Midsummer Morn, I'll Give My Love*  
*A Garland, May And December, Last And Marvellous*,  
*The Swab Of Love, My Bonny Boy, Come Bust The*  
*Drums And Sound the Fife*  
Michael Finnissey (p) Rec: 16 April 1986

THE HYPHEN in the title should alert you to  
the fact that this is not what it seems. A  
decade older than the other "New Complexity"  
composers with whom Finnissey is associated,  
this is his big work at reaching 30,  
music written *against* his background.

It opens with a prying chord, followed by  
vigorous application of the generative clusters  
Pierre Boulez reaps from Messiaen —  
utterly un-English. The panic induced by  
their seemingly resourceless unpredictability  
is abetted by a left-hand thunder that in the  
context of postcolonialism is blatantly nuclear.  
The nearest visual image would be Peter  
Kennard's famous montage of cruise missiles  
over Constable's "Haywain". Vaughan-  
Williams this is not.

"Midsummer Morn" touches on an aching  
folk melody, but it twinkles out into Cage  
looseness — another un-English component.  
Finnissey is a poised technician and his isolated  
drops make the heartstop wait that  
makes Walter Gieseking's Debussy so transfixing.  
What peace there is erupts into what  
seem like parodies of romantic excess brutality  
without catharsis.

There are odd pauses (frequently longer  
than those left between sections), as if the  
trajectory of exploration has become too  
dangerous. Like pleasurable dreams that suddenly  
veer into nightmares, Finnissey's music



Blackwell and Henry Grimes, one of the  
essential albums of the mid-60s. Here the  
communion is minimal, the effect is of a man  
determined not to listen to his fellow players,  
other than for their chord-placings, content  
to mumble querily to himself. It probably  
sounds best filtered down an airshaft.

Chet Baker did his sessions for Umiliani  
not to sell product, but to buy some. On one  
occasion, he got lost just before the first take.  
Turned out, he'd chased The Man all the way  
to Germany to buy some stuff. Big-hearted  
Piero kept his seat warm and his powder dry.  
The voice, though, is raw and clogged,  
totally uninspired; "il miglior trombetta del  
mondo", as the original sleeve proclaimed,  
sounds like a man in trouble.

We know, from *L'Assommoir Pour l'Eschafaud*  
alone, that movie scoring isn't always a



is psychoanalytically exacting and frequently terrifying.

In "May And December" (the title itself an absurd pairing) fidgeting, unresolvable chords chatter at each other without communicating, the sustain pedal leaving weirdly twisting non-harmonies. It finishes in a surprise spasm: blood and mud.

Finnissy has a great feel for the piano's extremes of register, the opposite to the classical emphasis on the middle ground. The last track is a blast, twinkling top register notes seeking to pacify a rising violence from the bass. It calls on infantile horror at parents' arguing, the Punch and Judy of family life, escalating into a climax with the drive of a Freudian psychosis.

BEN WATSON

# KENNY BARRON-JOHN HICKS QUARTET

*Rhythm-A-Ning*  
Carré 7994 CD

*Sunflower, Nanna's Love Song, Blue Moon, After The Morning, Ghost Of Yesterday, Rhythm-A-Ning*  
Kenny Barron, John Hicks (p), Walter Booker (b), Jimmy Cobb (d). Rec. 3 September 1989.

FOR THE purposes of his sleeve note even Brian Priestley, jazz's "Mr Memory", can only come up with a few instances where the combination of two pianos has been successful in a jazz context. And without denying its considerable pleasures, I'd suggest that the present album offers a reminder of why this should be the case.

The basic problem with the double piano quartet is that it clutters and complicates the sound of the piano trio without adding anything in the way of textural variety. The complications can be fascinating, as in the opening of both Barron's "Sunflower" and Hicks's "After The Morning" (one of the strongest points of the album, incidentally, being the quality of its originals). Chords bounce off each other, hopping from one channel to the other and creating unpredictable, endlessly shifting patterns: the listener has to pick out the theme as it emerges diffidently, almost at random from the collision between the two voices. With Barron and Hicks both having served plenty of time

as accompanists, over the years, these songs tend to form a commentary on the dualistic nature of the piano as a jazz instrument: Hicks's manic cascades of notes will draw out some of Barron's most energetic support, or Barron will leave breathing spaces in his solos which Hicks will then move into, making friendly incursions into foreign territory, so that each tune reaches a point where it becomes difficult, or agreeably irrelevant, to sort out who's meant to be taking the lead.

Once your ear has got used to the interplay, though (and with four of the tracks clocking in at over 12 minutes, there's plenty of time for this to happen), the music's undoubted momentum, its busy clash of ideas and temperaments, is never quite enough. In a dry live recording, with Cobb at his most uncompromising - heavy with



ride and rim-shot - and Booker sometimes swamped by the pianists' lower register activity, the whirlpool of sound and the lack of a clear guiding voice can start to seem relentless. In a set of exhausting generosity, the quartet somehow manage to provide both too much and too little. But I bet it was a terrific gig to watch.

JONATHAN COLE

# LENI STERN

*Close To The Light*  
Enja 6934 CD/LP

*Somebody's Somewhere, Sunflower, All Of Nothing, Close To The Light, Red Stripe, Phoenix, Thelma, Show Me, All Of Nothing*

David Sanborn (as), Wayne Krantz, Leni Stern (g); Paul Socolow, Lincoln Goines (b), Denis Chambers, Zach Danziger (d); Don Alias (perc). Collective personnel. Rec. December 1989.

# WAYNE KRANTZ

*Signals*  
Enja 6908 CD/LP

*Alliance, Faith In The Process, One Of Two, Don't Tell Me, At It; Signals, Society You're A Woman, Marx Room, Two Of Two, For Saxon*  
Jim Beard (ky), Wayne Krantz, Leni Stern (g), Hiram Bullock, Anthony Jackson (b), Denis Chambers (d), Don Alias (perc). Rec. May-June 1990.

FUSION has produced few sages but hundreds of onices. Considering how long fusion has been around it's astonishing that in such a crowded marketplace how few records of genuine significance have emerged. Even so, this doesn't stop the fusion onions fearlessly treading where man has trodden before in pursuit of rock-style capital gains. The problem, as is becoming more and more apparent in all areas of jazz as the music progresses into the 1990s, is that a high level of instrumental prowess is now accepted - even expected - as the norm rather than the exception.

The challenge is now one of conceptualisation, of creating a context in which to focus all this instrumental expertise. This challenge seems to apply particularly to fusion, with musicians like Frank Gambale, Alan Holdsworth, John Patitucci, Scott Henderson, Stanley Clarke and Dave Weckl - to name but a few - who have elevated technique to the extent that it has become the main element of their style.

Whether or not Leni Stern manages to develop beyond the notion of technique as an end in itself, the most common currency of contemporary fusion, remains to be seen. Certainly her previous three albums have shown her concern for melodic development rather than cranking up the volume, leaning on the wang-bar and letting loose with long, discursive high-tech runs that dazzle with superficial flash. Stern, the German-born ex-actress and wife of Mike Stern - he who cranked up the volume, lent on the wang-bar and let loose with long discursive high-tech runs with Miles Davis ("I was only obeying



orders") — has an almost delicate touch and a moody, introspective feel to her playing.

*Close To The Light*, like her Enja debut *Secrets*, shows her moving away from the purer jazz feel of her previous two albums to a tight, if not original-sounding fusion ensemble that seems to blend rather than stand out from the rest of the pack. The inclusion of Dave Sanborn's trademark alto on "Somebody's Something" and "All Or Nothing" (first take) has the effect of tilting the balance of the band's tenuous identity into anonymity — he commandeers the proceedings as if it were his band. However, rising drum star, the 19-year-old Zach Danziger, impresses on the former track and "Red Stripe" Stern's delicate lyricism, at times sounding like her husband's in his more considered moments, is effectively contrasted by Wayne Krantz with whom she shares the spotlight. Her duets on the title track and the second version of "All Or Nothing" reveal her economic, tenuous charm that seems somehow out of place in such a slick idiom.

Wayne Krantz first emerged on the international circuit with the Carla Bley Sextet, although it was Hiram Bullock who appeared on the eponymously-titled album. It was during his period with Bley that Stern invited him to join her own band and on "As Is" they again duet together with the same studied charm they evoked on *Close To The Light*.

However, Krantz seems unable to shape an ensemble with any individuality, instead, there are only three tracks with the full band, the title track, "Faith In The Process" and "Don't Tell Me". The rest of the tracks are cameos that feature his original compositions, either with percussionist Don Alias on "Alliance" and "Sassy You're A Woman" or alone. It shows Krantz-as-romantic-fusioner, tied to the idiom and searching for profundity but no new truths are revealed or secrets shared.

STUART NICHOLSON

## VARIOUS ARTISTS



### *Dex Improvements: Victrolaville 1989*

Victrola 09 CD

*Taxi Round The Bore Of A Hat, Phosphorescent Camouflage, Nightbird Shadow Blues* — Lachonna

Smith (vn, v), Davey Williams (g), *Northern Monologues, Green And Blue Versions* — Hans Reichel (g). *The First And Last Fading* — Paul Plumley (p), Lisle Ellis (b), *Pavlovian* — New Winds, J D Parran (cl), Ned Rothenberg (s), Robert Dick (f), *Modus* — J D Parran (s), Ned Rothenberg (s), *Cronchins* — Ned Rothenberg (s), *Nitoch* — Maggie Nicols (v), Lindsay Cooper (bassoon, ss, s), Irene Schweizer (p). Rec. 6-9 October 1989.

LACHONNA SMITH and Davey Williams get stuck into some agreeably abrasive and spiky improvising. Their transformations have a genuine relationship to surrealism; the familiar and unfamiliar shifting balance and relation (and is that a Country & Western undercurrent I hear?). I've found some previous recordings difficult to stomach but here they are funny and serious.

Two fine solos from Mr Reichel's hand-



crafted guitars — at last he's getting wider recognition. Both are good examples of his recent solo playing — also check out his recent *Coco Bolo Nights* (FMP) — and he's still travelling in an increasingly harmonic direction. (Next stop ECM.)

Paul Plumley and Lisle Ellis are new to me but they easily achieve the quality of the other nine pieces here. Plumley is an enviously violent pianist — clearly influenced by Taylor but with a distinctive, bright sense of melody and rhythm which are his own.

New Winds have an other-worldly heterophonic sound which I find quite difficult to follow, they rarely thrill me the way that the ROVA sax-quartet does, but I think they may be progressing towards something equally strong and important. The Parran/Rothenberg duet is dancey, conversational

and complex, while Rothenberg's solo finds him successfully adapting Evan Parker's tenor and soprano studies to the alto with an edgy tone reminiscent of Beason. It's very imaginative and imbued with rhythmic flow.

Maggie Nicols, Lindsay Cooper and Irene Schweizer build a spontaneous invention which balances extreme virtuosity and very big love. "Nitoch" captures the three in a superbly expansive moment and has some of Maggie's most beautiful and dramatic recorded singing — crowing witch, bar-frequency overtones, a Scottish accent: "Why don't I ever speak in my natural tongue... all this bloody English." It's devastating. This is a great collection.

RICHARD SCOTT

## AMSTERDAM STRING TRIO



### *Wild West*

Nimbus NS 566 CD

*TRIPOT*, . . . vol. att. Muziek & Kartonnen dozen . . . *le Tour qui Change, Foute Walter, Sint & Pout, Treuch Muziek, Glensnitslyk & Makkelyk, PONTIUS, Arms*. Maurice Hornstius (vla), Ernst Reijger (clo), Ernst Glenne (b). Rec. 2 December 1988

I WONDER what the Academy of Music of the West, Santa Barbara, made of this concert-performance of Hornstius's compositions by his misleadingly-named trio, which not only has the wrong instruments for a classical string trio, but also hails from a similar musical (as well as geographical) zone to those of Alencá and Breuker's better-known outfits. "Footie Waltz" is the most obviously Breukerian moment, but this music has no shortage of individual things to say for itself, even if most of them are in quotation marks and heavily underlined.

Maurice Hornstius's mind is obviously a hectic place — new ideas in contradictory idioms tumble over one another, often at the same rate as in a Zorn stylistic-pillage raid through with more sleight-of-hand than sledgehammering. "TRIPOT" is a precipitous circumnavigation of 20th-century string composition for the first 90 seconds, before settling uncertainly into dismembered Barok from then on, and sounds very largely composed, the following track, more improvisational, begins with a pleasantly sonorous





pizzicato march, then disintegrates into furious disjoined strumming like three dinosaurs blundering through Ligeti's second string quartet (eventually supplanted by koto impersonations). "PONTIUS" is a sustained mock-antique chorale; in "Trench Muzik" (and elsewhere) the ghost of lives is invoked. And so on — whether a piece is three or 15 minutes long, the rate of stylistic turnover (and its direction) is completely unpredictable.

What's more, the players inhabit all these musical spaces as if to the manner born, the ensemble precision (when required) is second to none, and the overall sound is an example to anyone concerned with recording string instruments (I wonder if they sounded as good to the live audience). I suppose I've said enough now for you to decide whether you'll find this disc totally engaging or (and?) pointless, but one final point: this disc isn't Dutch Eccentrics Strike Again, it's "serious, subtle and highly emotional music." OK?

RICHARD BARRETT

# MARK ISHAM

Mark Isham

Virgin VUSJ36 CD-LP/HC

*Honeyman Nights, I Never Will Know, Marnavite, An Eye On The World, Blue Moon, Ashes And Diamonds, Toward The Infinite White, Songs Of The Flying Fish, Turkish Delight*  
Mark Isham (tr, kys, electronics), Chick Corea (p), John Novello (org), David Torn, Peter Masanu (g), Ed Mann (vib), John Patitucci, Doug Lunan (b), Peter van Hook, Terry Bozzio, Alex Acuna (d), Tanita Tikaram (v) Collective personnel Rec 1990

I CALLED buckets at *The Life And Times Of Harvey Milk* and part of the reason was Mark Isham's score. Its dying falls and elegant gestures, ideal as soundtrack music, somehow came out all New Age-ish on the debut *Virgin Catalina* two years ago.

The eponymous follow-up is an altogether more individual and considered effort. The plangent trumpet tone recalls Palle Mikkelborg rather than Miles, though with none of Mikkelborg's proximity, or Marc Charig's cornet solo on King Crimson's "Islands", an aria that still gets me in the lachrymal ducts. The emphasis is on textures rather than

structures, though "Toward The Infinite White" and "Marionette" merit reasonable surveyor's reports. "Turkish Delight" quickly locates the sensitive cavities, after two sides, something a little more wholesome is called for.

David Torn is a useful atmospheric expert, but by no means a natural improviser. The drummers are generally good, and generally better at spatial accenting rather than at calling cadence. Doug Lunan — who must be a kinsman of Man Jumping bass person John of that ilk — does a sterling job. Apart from paying a fraternal visit to another of the Scientology fraternity, at isn't clear what Chick Corea is there for, his contribution to "Ashes And Diamonds" is, ahem, a trifle attenuated. Someone has doubtless written a paper somewhere on the relation



between Scientology and improvised music, as far as I'm concerned, Old Mother Hubbard left the cupboard pretty bare.

And then there's Tanita Tikaram — to whom large flocks of elderly northerners recently gravitated under the impression she was Kiri Te Kanawa. Not one of your belters, she gives "Blue Moon" a Quaalude reading that makes the Cowboy Junkies' cover sound like hard-core. Her own "I Never Will Know" works rather better with a basically acoustic band, but it's a track that belongs on *her* album rather than seethumbing it here.

I can't believe that Isham has really gone Clear. This is all much too bound up and earth-bound. If you have it, dig out Mikkelborg's *Heart To Heart*, or even *Islands*, or cop a bubble at Harvey Milk. Keep this one

for the background when the doors won't open.

BRIAN MORTON

# VINCE MENDOZA

Start Here

World Pacific P 7 94592 2 CD

*Bale Of The Day, Angelica, Elder Wings, Tough Crowd, Her Corner, Save The World, Page One, Opus Made, True Story*  
Jerry Perl, Bob Carlisle, Dave July (trb), Dave Taylor (trb), Dave Brannard (trb), Judd Miller (EVI, syn programming), Lawrence Feldman (f, ss, as), Bob Mintzer (tr, ss, cl, bcl), Joe Livano (tr, ss), Lee Kwang Bay (vib), Warren Lash (cl), John Scofield, Ralph Towner (g), Jim Bead, Marc Cohen (p), Vince Mendoza (syn, seq), Will Lee, Gary Peacock (b), Peter Erskine (d, perc) Collective personnel Rec 13/14 November 1989

YOU MAY well look twice at the remarkable line-up on this album. In fact, this is only one of several surprises lurking behind the cheesy city skyline sleeve pic.

Vince Mendoza is largely known for his associations with other people, particularly as his first album was only released in Japan. His previous cohorts include several of the musicians on *Start Here* as well as such notable marques as Burton, Metheny, Haden, Abercrombie and Brecker M. Also, he and programmer/EVlist Judd Miller figured prominently on John Abercrombie's excellent ECM album *Annas*. But here he is now with a generally available release, again consisting of his own compositions and again finding him in some pretty distinguished company.

The other surprises? Take them in any order. Mendoza has a personal musical grounding in film, commercial and TV music, but has avoided being infected by any kind of muzak vapidity, although his talents as an arranger have as much or more to do with the success of this music as his abilities as a composer. Despite the protestations of EMI's press release his tunes, as such, aren't "strikingly original", although they're eminently listenable, however, his exceptionally creative approach to the problems of small-to-middling band arrangements transform fairly predictable melodies into elegant, complex textural works evocative in certain respects of Gil Evans. He also blithely en-



dorses his Macintosh (tee-em) and Performer (tee-em) sequencing software which seems to have no constricting effect on the music at all, although it's fair to say his compositional structures are pretty formal in conception.

That a group of such highly individual players can be so effectively induced to participate in Mendoza's orchestrations is perhaps the best recommendation of all. The music is assured, smartly executed and well worth checking out.

TOM CORBIN

**URS LEIMGRUBER  
& JOHN WOLF BRENNAN**



*Polyphyllum*

L + R Records LR 45913 CD

*Intermezzo, Eleven-One, West 9th Street, Loner, In-  
tegration, Falafel, Tharlin, Far Out*  
Urs Leimgruber (ss, ts, prep recds); John Wolf  
Brennan (p, prep p, bodhran) Rec: 26 May 1989.

**JOHN WOLF BRENNAN,  
URS LEIMGRUBER  
& NORMA WINSTONE**



*MAP (Music For Another Planet)*

L + R Records LR 45931 CD

*Quartets, Sinfonia, La Vie Celeste, Far Out, Triplex,  
Catching Grass, A Boat De Saffie, Dancing In The  
Elevator, Space, Legitissimo, Spheres, Integration,  
Eleven-One*  
Urs Leimgruber (ss, ts, prep recds); John Wolf  
Brennan (p, prep p, bodhran, cel, org, perc, v);  
Norma Winstone (v). Rec: 26 May 1989, 23  
August 1988.

**PAGO LIBRE**



*Extensora*

Splasc (h) Records H314-2 CD

*Attaca, 58 West 9th Street, The Story Of The Noble  
Knight, Pansconversation No 1, Intermezzo Per Quatre,  
Warsaw For Saw 11-1, March Of The Little  
People (To A Concert Of Maria Callas), Fille  
Rage, Pansconversation No 2, Casador, Big Mama  
Tank, A Shower, Milesanket, One For Bob*  
Lars Lindvall (t, flbn, prep t, perc, whistle); Steve  
Goodman (vn, saw, whistles, v); John Wolf  
Brennan (p, prep p, syn, vn, perc); Daniele Pazumi  
(b, bodhran); Gabriele Hasler (v) Rec. no details.

*POLYPHYLLUM* AND *MAP* demonstrate the way in which the music of Swiss saxophonist Urs Leimgruber and Irish-Swiss pianist John Wolf Brennan continues to develop an impressively expanding vocabulary across their series of duo releases. Both of these are products of the same session, although the latter also includes three live tracks recorded with Norma Winstone, who is generously given equal billing on the sleeve.

Both releases are more varied and consistently realised than their earlier collaborations, which flirted with a sonic and textural world verging on New Age, although always hedged around with contradictory elements and splendid improvisation to keep it out of that corner.

These are more vigorous, and reveal a more internally dynamic series of registers,



by turns reflectively melodic, achingly poignant, and furiously energetic, as well as returning to variations of the gradually unfolding soundscapes of the earlier albums, notably on the *MAP* set, which tends to explore a more abstract vein. That is equally true of Norma Winstone's evocative but understated wordless vocals on the three cuts to which she contributes.

A couple of the compositions turn up again amid the engaging anarchy of the *Pago Libre* release, including a manically jaunty re-working of "West 9th Street" over Patumi's huge walking bass line. The band revel in the richness of instrumental textures they wring from their buzzy sonic battery; they take chances and skip around musical registers as if there were no tomorrow, and only a pastiche yesterday.

Inevitably, it misses here and there, but for the most part it is highly impressive, determinedly exploratory, occasionally silly, but wisely exciting music to set alongside the more considered virtues of the duo releases.

KENNY MATHESON

**CONSPIRACY**



*The Beanfart Scale*

No label or number MC

*Viking, Fortan, Dagger, Fisher*

Adam Bohman (prepared strings and found objects), Nick Coultary (p); Andy Hammond (g); Barry Edgar Pilcher (ts, as, cl). Rec: August 1989, April 1990.

*CONSPIRACY* are London-based perpetrators of a radically not-jazz free improvisation. Their music is multilayered, organic and possibly a little crazy, taking place in a void where anything from sheer noise to total silence is possible. It is certainly not what anyone would describe as pleasant and on first acquaintance may seem purposefully ungainly, filled as it is with gashes and scrapes, and other scars and imperfections. Yet they uncover a very hard-won, ugly kind of beauty. It has little to do with references but there are some pointers: Musica Elettronica Viva, Xenakis, industrial music, live electronics and certainly AMM, with whom they share an absorption in the fundamentals of tone.

At one extreme their improvising is constructed of a wild array of blips and scratches over near-silences, then but persistent noises from Bohman and Hammond's strings, whose nearest counterpart for me lies closer to the literature of Samuel Beckett than to any other music. At the other extreme they veer towards a thick doom-laden cacophony (something is going to happen . . .) and within this their steadfast determination and self-suspension is no less thorough. The force of some early performances was rather weakened by a predictable relationship between very low and very high volumes but on this cassette much of the playing explores more fertile and ambiguous areas between these two extremes.

*The Beanfart Scale* is a very original and



sometimes unerringly powerful nose I wouldn't want to listen to it first thing in the morning but I think it's a magnificent debut.

RICHARD SCOTT

Available from Recommended Records or by sending £4.50 to Nick Coady, 1003 Egglefield Road, London N1 1LQ

## CAULD BLAST ORCHESTRA



### Savage Dance

Eclectic Records ECL 9002 CD/MC

*Reds Within Wheels, The Tower Of Babel Snaps, The Cauld Blast, The Savage Dance, Oyster Wires Root! Turbolen Lodge, The Rusty Band, Rustin' Red, Grass Shakes, Battle Hymn Of The Republic, The Quench.*

Karen Wimhuse, Steve Kertley (saxes, cl, fl), Anne Wood (vn), Ron Shaw (cl), Jack Evans (g, mand, wh, b), Norman Chalmers (conc, wh), Ian Johnston (p, acc, tba), Mike Travis (d, perc). Rec July 1990.

## VARIOUS



### Mason

Watercourse WC001 LP/MC

*Strong Shore* (Dick Lee & Nigel Richard), *The Tilted Ground* (Chuck Lyall & Tore Beunborg), *The Last Romantic* (Dick Lee's Chamber Jazz), *Open To Debate* (John Rae Collective), *Mix O'Jazz* (Nigel Richard/John Kenny/Rene Kenny/Mike Travis), *Impression* (John Longbottom/George Lyle/Nick Weston), *I Looked Over Jordanhill And What Did I See* (Steve Kertley & Tom McGrath), *Glaven Fashen* (Bill Sweeney). Rec no details

## HAMISH MOORE & DICK LEE



### The Best Knees

Harbourtown Records HAR014 CD/MC/LP

*Thunderhead/The Easy Club Red, The Rumble/Brig/ Boatman Bill/Las McGee's Romantic/Burn/The Broom Triangle, Nighan Dab/Alanna/The Tapot Jag, The Rock And The Wic Peble/Tot/Barnock/Of Barren/Song For John/Thair A Nall Ailua Thugan/Jenny's Chokan/Jimmy Dang The Winner, Maggie's Red/The Slapst Bar/Paddy In The Swamp, The Slow Hand/The Mongoose In The Bye/The Best Knees, Swan Island/Trip To Pabun, Ann's Tama Bilevich Street/The Famous Ballynane.*

Hamish Moore (Highland pipes, Scottish small

pipes, whistles), Dick Lee (ss, as, bcl, rec, syn), various additional personnel. Rec no dates

## SAVOURNA STEVENSON



### Tweed Journey

Eclectic Records ECL 9001 CD/MC

*The Source, Forging The Tweed, Wauls From The Tweed, Last Bell, Travis & Coadyhouse, Percussion Sals, Forest Flower, Tweed Journey.*

Savourna Stevenson (harp), Dick Lee (saxes, bcl), Graham Muir (g), Ross Patterson (ky), Neil Hay (b), Mike Travis (d), Jan Sutherland (perc). Rec November 1989.

THE INTERMINGLING of jazz with influences from traditional music has been one of the more intriguing developments on the Scot-



tish jazz scene in the last couple of years, with predictably mixed but often surprising results. These four records all reflect that transaction to a greater or lesser degree, with the Cauld Blast Orchestra's debut the most adventurous.

Cauld Blast came together for the theatre production *Jack Tamsie's Bairns* earlier this year, playing composer Karen Wimhuse's imaginative re-workings of traditional material, and have decided to continue as a working unit. Part of that decision has involved a broadening out from their initial and already eclectic base, fuelled by a more overtly radical jazz influence in the music of Steve Kertley and Mike Travis, as well as constructive borrowings from rock and classical sources.

Already impressive live, the Orchestra's

performance on record underlines the diversity of their approach, but even in the short space of time in which they have existed, they have made huge strides towards integrating their eclecticism into a distinct group identity, shorn of the tokenist "here comes the jazz bit" feel which can pervade this kind of enterprise.

Savourna Stevenson's *Tweed Journey* is a commission from the Borders Festival, in which she began with solo harp and added a new musician on successive nights in different venues along the River Tweed. Her use of jazz harmonics is more restrained than Cauld Blast's, but no less effective, the resulting music has a charm all of its own, and succeeds admirably in fusing its elements into a coherent, beautifully played whole.

The recorded fruits of saxophonist Dick Lee's work with paper Hamish Moore are an indication of how well they have gelled. *The Best Knees* features three different bands in addition to the duo, with the contributions of the Hamish Moore Band and Fium holding to a more conventional folk idiom, while Lee's important horns-and-strings big band Chamber Jazz stretches towards both jazz and a classical feel.

The duo, though, is still the most developed combination. They have evolved a carefully worked out pairing of instruments—soprano sax with the steely Highland pipes, clarinet with the gentler bellows-blown one—and a register which genuinely meets in a territory of its own somewhere between jazz and folk.

Their collaboration has moved in a different direction to that taken in Lee's equally fascinating duo with Nigel Richard, as featured on *Mason* ("treasure" in Gaelic). The compilation provides a snapshot of some of the developments in new Scottish music, but only some, and it is already beginning to fade to a sepia tint at the edges. Delays in getting the disc out have ensured that most of the contributors, notably the John Rae Collective, have moved on to better things. It is valuable documentation, but perhaps slightly misleading in relation to current developments.

KENNY MATHIESON

Eclectic Records are available by post from 9 Albany Terrace, Whitehouse Lane, Edinburgh EH9 1DU, price £6.99 (MC) or £11.99 (CD), including postage.



# CANNONBALL ADDERLEY

★

## Radio Nights

Night VN2 CD

*The Little Boy With The Sad Eyes, Madnight Mood, Stars Fell On Alabama, Fiddler On The Roof, Work Song, The Song My Lady Sings, Unto Seven, Monologues On Oh Babe And Country Proseur*  
Nat Adderley (c); Cannonball Adderley (as); Charles Lloyd (ts); Joe Zawall (p); Sam Jones (b); Roy McCurdy, Louis Hayes (d) Collective personnel Rec: 1967-68

# EDDIE HARRIS

★

## A Tale Of Two Cities

Night VN3 CD

*Chicago Serenade, Cherokee, Lovers Man, Swayin' (For Two), I Can't Get Started, Illusionary Dreams, Don't Let Me Go, Lovers Man*  
Eddie Harris (t, es, p, v); Jack Wilson, Rob Schneiderman (p); Herbie Lewis, Louis Spears (b); Eddie Marshall, Tootie Heath (d) Collective personnel Rec: 1978 and 1983

# RAHSAAN ROLAND KIRK

★

## The Man Who Cried Fire

Night VN1 CD

*Slow Blues, Bye Bye Blackbird, Multi-Horn Variations, Unidentifiable Tenor Selection, You Did It, You Did It, New Orleans Fantasy, Night Train, Mr P C, A Visit From The Blues*  
Rahsaan Roland Kirk (reeds, v); Steve Turre (tb); Kenney Rogers (bs); Hilton Ruiz, Ron Burton (p); Henry Pearson (b); Sonny Brown, Robert Say, John Goldsmith (d); Joe Tondoro, Todd Butkan (perc) Collective personnel Rec: 1970s

# LES MCCANN

★

## Lei Is More

Night VN4 CD

*Maleb, With These Hands, Samba, All The Way; Unidentifiable Blues, Somewhere, Oh Babe, Satus Doll, Little Blue Volkungen, Claypotatoes, Bird Story, Compared To What*  
Nat Adderley (c); Cannonball Adderley, Gerald Albright (as); Bobby Bryant Jr, Stanley Turrentine (ts); Les McCann, Norman Simmons (p); Leroy Vinyard, Sam Jones, Curtis Robertson Jr, Jimmy Rowser, Miles Smith, Ray Brown (b); Frank Severino, Tony St James, Donald Dean, Louis Hayes, Louis Powers (d); Buck Clarke (perc); Roberta

Flack (v, p); Carmen McCrae (v) Collective personnel Rec: 1960s-1970s

THESE ARE strange records. The first thing I was reminded of was Roland Kirk's *Cat Of The Three-Sided Andus Dream*, because that sums up the feel of Joe! Dorn's first releases on Night, the label he's set up to put out the best of the gigantic stack of live tapes he and collaborator Bernard Drayton have accumulated. These are more like montages of sound than mere live albums, indulgent patchworks of favourite musicians, the actual music is interspersed with fragments from interviews, stage talk, jokes (Les McCann's "Bird Story" is a ten-minute shaggy dog), anything that might summon the spirit of the player and the occasion better than just the notes they played. Surprisingly, most of

phrasing sound like Shepp on a middling day, and "Illusionary Dreams" goes into a rap that will pull after a couple of listens.

*The Man Who Cried Fire* is as witty as all of Kirk's records, but there is an unusual glimpse of his clatter in "Slow Blues", a chaotically exciting "You Did It", a ripe confrontation with the Olympia Brass Band in "New Orleans Fantasy" and a moving "Blues" done just before his death. This is all soaked in Kirk's works.

*Radio Nights* is no more or less than the Adderleys with everything cooking. Sam Jones and Louis Hayes, often overlooked, keep all the music under very safe wraps. This is the least surprising of the four records, but might be the one to have if you want the music to come first.

MIKE FISHER

# HOWARD RILEY

★

## Procession

Wordsworm WM0101 CD

*April Again, Procession, Reflect On, Inaugurable, In Time, Live Joe, Unheard, Striding, Tell Me*  
Howard Riley (p) Rec: 9 April 1990



In my *Wire* piece on Howard Riley (Sept '89), I called him 'the Complete Piazosa'. *Procession*, his tenth solo album and his first since *For Four On Two Two* (Affinity) in 1982, not only provides more evidence of that truth, but also documents the simultaneous broadening of the scope of his art and the deepening of his work's emotional content.

As with his celebrated series of 'imprints', almost all of the pieces on *Procession* capture Riley in the process of expanding on a central idea, be it a texture like the walking bass in the opening track "April Again", a theme or even a deceptively simple phrase. The result is a stunning demonstration of improvisational virtuosity. Listen, for instance, to the conclusion of the beautiful "Reflect On", which contrives to distil all the thematic elements of the preceding piece while heightening its already considerable emotional impact. Or to the delightful "Striding", which uses the stride form as a springboard and which somehow manages to combine hints of Jaki Byard's humour with a wholly serious

it works. Maybe it's because, with players like McCann and Harris, who are scarcely on the level of their greatest contemporaries, such documents are more revealing and pertinent than a straight-ahead live album. Kirk was never done justice by records; and Cannonball, although his is the most "musical" of the four discs, was probably recorded too often.

McCann's record is the most fun. He recorded it all himself, and there are several tracks he doesn't play on but are things he happened to tape - snippets of Carmen Turrentine and the Adderleys, and a long, glowing "All The Way" by Roberta Flack when she was just another nightclub chanteuse. His own cuts are cheerful, rollicking soul-jazz. Eddie Harris' record has its moments, although his gruff tone and choppy



exploration of the possibilities inherent in this invigorating genre.

Only the album's concluding track, "Tell Me", is totally improvised, and it is a *tour de force*, allowing Riley to exhibit some of his most exhilarating effects – the ringing flourishes, reminiscent of the pealing of church bells; a chiming delicacy counterpoised by vigorous left hand; occasional snatches of attractive melody – all played with great subtlety and panache, an apparently impossible combination, but one which Riley brings off repeatedly on this superb album.

CHRIS PARKER

## MICHAEL FORMANEK



*Wide Open Spaces*  
Enja 4432 LP/CD

*Edge To Edge, Yahoo Justice, Fantasy Suite, Wide Open Spaces, The Sage, Chalk And Dagger, Wild Dreams, Coffee Time, Home, At Home, Slothdancing, Outrigger, Rattling Walls, Auralist Voices, Edge To Edge, Open Door.*

Georg Olsby (ss, ss), Mark Feldman (vcl), Wayne Krantz (g); Mark Feldman (b), Jeff Harshfield (d).  
Rec: 25, 26 January 1990.

BASSIST FORMANEK, hitherto associated with Joe Henderson, Dave Liebman, Mark Murphy and others, has rounded up a cast of very different New York players for what purports to be some kind of loosely formulated suite or tune-cycle. "I wanted to use individual pieces to set the form of the overall project", he tells Bill Milkowski in the CD booklet. (Isn't that what almost everybody does – indeed, can't help doing – when they make an album?) "Each piece is like another chapter, and what unifies them is a basic set of themes that comes from a kind of central place. All the music is connected to that in very vague ways." The connections must be vague. Apart from the fact that "Edge To Edge" makes a second appearance towards the end of the album, reduced to a bass solo and a theme, and that the beginning of "Our-elude" is obviously an extension of "Sloth Dancing", I don't pick up a particularly pronounced sense of continuity. With the preponderance of short tracks, eight of them less than three minutes long, *Wide Open Spaces* sounds as episodic as any downtown

project this side of Zorn's cut-ups. Some episodes are more gripping than others. Bottom of the barrel (for me) is "Coffee Time" which Milkowski says "could be a jingle for Maxwell House written by Ornette Coleman" – an accurate assessment.

But the good things here outweigh the indifferent. I particularly like "Yahoo Justice", a rough and tumble shufflebeat blues, whose relative simplicity is in welcome contrast to pieces where the writing approaches the border of fussiness. Solos are in general of a high order, with the leader, Olsby and Feldman the most striking voices. Olsby, temporarily freed from the eclecticism-at-all-costs policies of M-Base, sounds more concentrated here than on his recent *Sessions Of Renewal*. He has a lovely, darting solo midway through the title track, and brings



tremendous impetus to the first "Edge To Edge" with his long, speeding lines.

Formanek himself is very strong throughout. There's a fine solo on the intro to "The Sage" and, playing arco, duets intriguingly with Feldman on "Wild Dreams" while Olsby's soprano leaps in and out of the sound with a silvery, flying fish sparkle.

There's a lot to absorb here. It would be interesting to hear Formanek regroup these players for some improvising on more open structures. I can understand the urge to cram as much music as possible into this album after years of sideman duties but if he took this project further and loosened the reins, he might find that less writing would yield richer rewards, particularly with players of this calibre.

STEVE LAKE

## FASTLICKS



*Kewy Matheson sorts out the '91 early birds from the worms.*

HAMPTON HAWES: *BLUES FOR BUD* (Black Lion BL 760126); BUD POWELL: *BLUES FOR BOUFFEMONT* (Black Lion BL 760135); AT THE GOLDEN CIRCLE VOL. 2 (SheepChase SC 36002). It is not so much ironic as simply jazz history that the Hawes session is more impressive than either of those by its dedicatee. Bud Powell had more than his rightful share of the blues in his deeply troubled life, and his later work captured the crystalline brilliance of his early bebop sessions only in fits and starts. Hawes remains undervalued in many quarters even now, but his playing comfortably encompasses the fire of bebop, notably in the nervous flurries which punctuate his melodic lines at perfectly chosen moments, with the earthy stability of blues. This is a lovely example, with sympathetic aid from Art Taylor and Jimmy Woode. The Powell releases, both in trio format, have their masterly moments of quintessential Powell genius (especially the Paris section of *Blues For Bouffemont*), but I find it hard, as with late Lester Young, to shake off a burdening awareness of what isn't there anymore.

GEORGE GRUNTZ: *TRIC SERIOUS FUN* (Enja 6038-2); ENRICO PIERANUNZI: *TRIO: NO MAN'S LAND* (Soul Note 121221); EUROPEAN JAZZ: *TRIO: NORWELIAN WOOD* (Timeless SJP 322). Just to vary things a little, we have some European piano trios. The idiosyncratic George Gruntz is by far the most distinctive voice among the three pianists, with a highly unconventional melodic and rhythmic concept, and a penchant for wacky, allusive titles (and treatments) like "ALL-ergic BLUES" and "SO. WHAT fun??" His trio features Mike Richmond and Adam Nussbaum in some delightfully off-centre creations.

The European Jazz Trio, on the other hand, are the most mainstream jazz of the three. Pianist Karel Boelcke, bassman Frans Jan van Hoven and Roy Dacus play a



varied programme of standards, originals and pop tunes with great taste and a nice feel for the music, although with no great stylistic input of their own. Pieranunzi's Trio on Soul Note, Giovanni Bonardelli's more mainstream outlet, has no great surprises to offer either, but is a little more spiky, and has the excellent Marc Johnson on bass alongside drummer Steve Houghton.

**POSITION ALPHA: GREETINGS FROM THE RATS** (*Dragon DR 199*); **FUCHS & KATZER: FUNKFARKER** (*FMP 26*). I had heard good things about Swedish saxophone quartet plus percussionist Position Alpha, but found this release completely irritating. Hints emerge here and there of the kind of music the band might be capable of if they got down to playing rather than messing around with the corny B-movie soundtrack which constitutes *Greetings From The Rats*.

I didn't enjoy the collaboration between reeds player Wolfgang Fuchs and computer musician George Katzer either, despite being generally well-disposed to the European improvisation-new music mode to which it belongs. Recorded live with lots of squally soprano and both bass and contra-bass clarinet interwoven with electronic noises, it did nothing for me. Next, please.

**JERRY BERGONZI: INSIDE OUT** (*Red Records RR 123230-2*). This is a pleasing straight-ahead set from saxophonist Jerry Bergonzi, but while the shoddy sleeve tells us the names of the designer and photographer, it doesn't bother with the musicians. Bergonzi builds his solos in a lucid, carefully-considered fashion which can be outwardly exciting, but actually takes few opportunities to break out of its post-Coltrane orthodoxy. The anonymous rhythm trio provide solid enough backing to a well-played but rather familiar-sounding session of Bergonzi originals, plus a CD-only bonus of Cole Porter's "Night And Day".

**TAKASHI KAKO: SOLO CONCERT** (*Intigriti 32CJ-4*); **YOSUKE YAMASHITA QUARTET: JAZZBUHNE BERLIN '85 VOL. 4 (*Repertoire Records RR 4904-C*). Japan's fascination with jazz goes back at least to the immediate**

post-war period, and has now become an established if still slightly novel fact in the West. Takashi Kako, however, sounds as heavily influenced by European composed music as jazz, and much of this enjoyable solo recital betrays little evidence of improvisation. The most overtly jazz-based cuts are Steve Lacy's gospel-flavoured vamp "Papa's Midnight Hop" and Kako's own "11 Rue Titon", but the pianist's "L'Aube" or "Jardin De Monastere" owe more to a Debassian fascination with the intricacies of colouration.

Pianist Yosuke Yamashita comes out of the Cecil Taylor-early Don Pullen school, and the live quartet recording lacks nothing in excitement, with both saxophonists screaming through the upper registers at every opportunity over Yamashita's manic

SOLO CONCERT



chording. Powerful if unfocused stuff, although the 47-minute "Mish Gesh Sate" shifts around the stylistic registers a little, including a brief classical interlude. The Vol 4 refers to the series, incidentally, rather than to this band.

**ALLEN LOWE: AT THE MOMENT OF IMPACT** ... (*Fairhaven 002*). The names of Julius Hemphill and Don Byron might tempt the curious to check out this release from tenor saxophonist Allen Lowe, a player I don't recall hearing before. Both guests provide solid enough contributions, but the whole set has a curiously unfulfilled, rather contained feeling to it, as if the music constantly needs to be pushed just a little further to life it into the genuinely worthwhile bracket.

Allen lists the experiments of Astor Piazzolla as one of the major influences on his music, and tosses in a couple of enjoyable tangos to prove the point. Jeff Fuller and Ray Kaczynski provide the rhythmic foundation, with accordionist Jay Gitlin also making a couple of contributions. Interesting rather than exciting.

**RAY BROWN TRIO: SUMMER WIND** (*Concord C-4426*); **JEFF GARDNER TRIO: CONTINUUM** (*Pan PMC 1107*). There is a nicely laid-back feel to much of these two trio sets, with two magisterial rhythm sections demonstrating their art. Ray Brown has never allowed his fame as a virtuoso exponent of dazzlingly beautiful melodic bass-playing to obscure the inherent function of the instrument within any group in which he plays, and balances those two facets of his art to perfection within a highly comparable unit, featuring Gene Harris and Jeff Hamilton.

Gardner is an inventive and versatile pianist, and profits immensely from the presence of Eddie Gomez (whose handling of the melody line on "Flor Nova" is particularly exquisite) and Billy Hart, both of whom contribute sterling performances to the younger man's session without ever succumbing to the temptation of overshadowing him.

**BILL COLANGELO/TIANJI XIE: SHANGHAI BLUE** (*Brooklyn Jazz Liberation Front BJLF01*); **CLARION FRACTURE ZONE: BLUE SHIFT** (*ABC Records 846 221-2*). *Shanghai Blue* provides no information beyond the names of the players, but proves to be an entertaining mix of a slightly left-field Brooklyn-based jazz quintet, led by Bill Colangelo on soprano saxophone, with the more exotic voice of Tianji Xie on the erhu, a 2-string Chinese violin, which adds an eerie, folk-like texture to the music.

Clarion Fracture Zone are an Australian quintet, although saxophonist Tony Goormen was a citizen of Glasgow until he married visiting co-saxophonist Sandy Evans and emigrated a couple of years back. Their new group confirms the premise of the saxophone quartet they formed here, and shares with that band an emphasis on imaginative use of instrumental textures as well as strong soloing.

Boulez continued from page 28

music to be performed, to be performed, to be performed, so the creativity goes completely away."

BOULEZ LIKES to put musicians on the spot. He is very critical of the "star" conductor who flies in to one rehearsal and performance of a piece the entire orchestra "knows" anyway. He also argues for an organic approach to the tradition, quoting T S Eliot's famous dictum that new works "reorder" the past: his own programmes deliberately seek to show the consequences of past works, as well as the light cast on the old by the new.

"The worst is when people look at things in a box, isolated, supposing that it comes from nothing and goes to nothing. Especially what disturbs me is that it goes to nothing: it does not feed anything, just there to be looked at with respect — beautiful objects and that's it."

This is the opposite of post-modernism's enthusiasm for the loss of historical perspective engendered by the plunderings of the culture industry. He has few kind words to say about the American minimalists whose works have been hailed as "post-modern", championing instead the great Elliott Carter, whose astonishing oboe concerto he has just conducted for Erato records.

Boulez's polemical stance is a reminder that "culture" is not

a static pile of treasures but a battlefield of ideas. For example, the relative pre-eminence of Vivaldi is a 20th century phenomenon. It was Ezra Pound, with his hatred for music he could not "follow", who proposed a return to Vivaldi's primitive clarity — before Pound emigrated to Italy to take an active part in Mussolini's equally archaic Fascist state.

In proposing an active engagement in structures that may elude the listener, Boulez's music parallels the fear and beauty and alienation of modern life. Unlike the minimalists, who propose a facile contemplation of "simple", "ethnic" musics whose real timbral weight and presence they contemptuously ignore, Boulez invites us to face the full possibilities of a modern Western orchestra, a sweep that extends the traditions of Mahler and Schoenberg into a soundworld that can both inform and entrance devotees of utterly different genres. ●

#### recent records

- Boulez Conducts *Edvard Vares* (Sony Classical SK45844)
- Boulez Conducts *Boulez* (incl *Eclair/Multiples*) (Sony Classical SK45839)
- Boulez Conducts *Boulez* (incl *Le Visage Nupri*) (Erato 2292-45494)
- Barnstone Conducts *Boulez* (incl *Rosch*) (Erato 2292-45493)
- Boulez Conducts *Carter* (incl *Oboe Concerto*) (Erato 2292-45364)
- Recommended reading
- Pierre Boulez — *Orientations* (tr Martin Cooper, London, 1986)
- Frank Zappa — *The Real Frank Zappa Book* (tr Peter Occhiogrosso, New York, 1989)

#### Philly Stories

Philly Stories continued from page 14

infusions of funk and rock in it."

Wait a minute. Ten years ago would be 1980, just before Wynton Marsalis, when the hot young musicians were nominal avant-gardists like James Newton and David Murray. Maybe they weren't playing in Bradley's, but maybe that spoke badly about Bradley's, not about them.

The plot thickened in October, when *Time* ran a cover story on Wynton Marsalis (weren't they about seven or eight years late in getting around to him?), with sidebars about most of the musicians the *Times* had featured. The whole package was headlined "The New Jazz Age".

Few American editors being able to let a bandwagon roll by without them, you can bet that Piazza's story occasioned *Time*'s. But what must have finally persuaded *Time*'s editors to give Thomas Sanction the green light was info such as this:

"Marsalis, whose band commands fees ranging from \$2,000 to \$40,000 a night, is already worth several million dollars. . . . The take of his sidemen is much lower — typically ranging from \$40,000 to \$60,000 a year — but that still puts them in the top 20% of US income earners . . ."

In *Time*, it always comes down to money. Would Wynton and his sidemen be any less worthy of coverage if they were broke and living in the streets, as many American musicians are?

The problem with "trend" pieces of this sort — quite apart from their refusal to admit that there might be talented young

experimentalists who haven't gotten themselves together yet (and who figure to be shunned by major labels when they finally do) — is that they perpetuate the neo-con myth that jazz evolved from bop to aberrant fusion to bop again, with free and its offshoots not even counting as jazz. They also foster the illusion that nothing much was happening in jazz before the arrival of these wunderkinds, proof of which is that you've hardly read a word about jazz in these magazines since the last time they published a trend piece on "the swing back to tradition" (which, in the case of the *Sunday Magazine* was in 1984).

The young musicians themselves — some of whom (Roberts, Hargrove) clearly warrant the coverage, and some of whom (De Francesco, Christopher Hollyday) clearly don't — aren't the real story, anyway. The real story is the selling of them. In pop, youth is a market. In jazz, it's become the product. Unlike, say, New Kids On The Block, Neophobic Youth aren't being aimed at record buyers their own age or younger, but to creaking babyboomers of my generation who still consider themselves jazz fans even though they haven't much liked anything new they've heard since 1965.

But why am I complaining? If *Time* and *The New York Times* say we're experiencing a jazz renaissance, we soon will be — that's the way things work over here. I just hope our renaissance proceeds more equitably than Britain's, which doesn't seem to have paid off very well for any musician nor young and pretty. Or old and dead. ●



The following are still available (\* indicates that stocks are very low)

- \*1 Steve Lacy**, Eric Dolphy, Harold Land, Ran Blake, John Stevens, Max Roach
- 12 Afro Jazz**, Laverne Anderson, Cleo McGreger, Phil Minton & Roger Turner
- 18 Sonny Rollins**, Tenney Chase, Jayce Carter, Bobby McFerrin, Stanley Jordan, Bertrand Tavernier, Joe Farrell
- 19 Ornette Coleman**, Charlie Haden, Steve Lacy, Slim Gastland, Jazz Caravan
- 20 Art Blakey**, Hank Mobley, Goro Tiro, Bobby Watson, Wynton & Branford Marsalis
- 21 Chet Baker**, Pirelli Zoo, Jamaraldeen Tacona, Chocin Valdes & Arturo Sandoval, Phil Wachsmann, Michael Nymann, Naima Ergonen
- 22 John Coltrane**, James Blood Ulmer, The Giant Steps, Robert Blades, Nathan Davis
- 23 Bill Laswell**, Louie Tabor, Cole Cruz, Anita O'Day, Alice Bach, Arto Lindsay
- 24 Betty Carter**, Joany Smith, Paul Bley, John Abernethy, Sidney Baker, Maggie Nishi, Vienna Art Orchestra
- \*25 Courtney Pine**, Paul Motian, George Coleman, Luciano Berio, Gerry Mulligan
- \*30 Chico Freeman**, Alex von Schlippenbach, Eddie Harris
- 32 Django Bates**, Dewey Rubina, Tony Oxley, Dramatica Galati, Weather Report
- 33 Sonny Rollins**, Dave Brubeck, The Beat, John Russell
- 34/35 Lester Bowie**, Branford Marsalis, Dexter Gordon, Serge Chaloff, Louie Tabor, Paul Lytine & Paul Lovens, Frank Zappa
- 36 Steve Williamson**, Phillip Best, Bill Friel, Art Farmer, Toshiko Kondo
- 37 Bobby McFerrin**, Haugrove Havers, Derry Dooen Brass Band, John Lurie
- 38 Wynton Marsalis**, Wayne Shorter, Nigel Kennedy
- 39 Andy Sheppard**, Gil Evans, Sheila Jordan, Todd Danowski
- 40 Ornette Coleman**, Charlie Haden, Charles Davis, Robert Ashley
- 41 Theolenious Monk**, Steve Coleman, Steve Swallow, Kronos, Tenney Smith
- 42 Horace Silver**, Bud Shank, Xero Slingsby, Barry White
- 43 Pat Metheny**, Robert Johnson, Albert Collins, Charlie Mariano, Baby Fingers
- 44/47 Courtney Pine**, Cecil Taylor, Roland Kirk, Mike & Kate Westbrook, Ben Bondeluck, Bob Goncalves
- 48 Joe Henderson**, Craig Oliver, Wayne Marshall, Herman Leonard, Harold Budd, Dave Lombardo
- \*49 Julius Hemphill**, Frank Morgan & Mike Stern, Billy Jordan, Clark Tracey, Akuma Kaku
- \*50 David Holland**, Tenney Smith, 50 Players, Arabian Jazz
- 51 Marilyn Crispell**, Andy Kirk, Roland Perrin, Gil Evans, Donna Richmond, Carper Brizzmann
- 52 Sonny Rollins**, Ed Blackwell, Hank Roberts, Mortie Archer, Ornette Coleman
- 53 John Scofield**, Chet Baker, John McLaughlin, Johnny Hodges, Van Freeman, Elliott Sharp
- 54 Jason Rebello**, Jimmy Rowles, Bob Stewart, Debut, Adeline Hall
- 55 David Sanborn**, Bosker Little, John Lurie, James Newell, Lou Gore
- 56 Composers**, Carla Bley, John Cage, Mike Montgomery, Judith Weir, Mike Gibbs
- 57 Bird**, Billy Bang, Dewey Goncalves, Charles McPherson, Red Ruby
- \*60 Andy Sheppard**, Jack DeJohnette, Lionel Hampton, Odalys de la Martinez
- \*62 Paul Reid**, Henry Threadgill, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Jackie McLean, Sergey Koryakshin, Nina Mac McKinney
- \*63 Duke Ellington**, Billy Strayhorn, Bitch Martin, Orphy Robinson, Harry Connick, Roy Eldridge
- 65 Bill Friel**, Anthony Braxton, Jimmy McGriff, Bobby Hutchins, John Harb
- 68 Chet Baker**, Peter King, Coleman Hawkins, Bob Berg, Shaka Koon
- 69 Courtney Pine & Iain Ballamy**, Wilton Bricker, Boney Bailey, Don Barrett
- 70/71 29th Street Saxophone Quartet**, Cassandra Wilson, Marcia Smitz, Smith, Les Korte, Michael Nymann, Bobby Bradford, John Rae Collective, Essential Albums Of The 80s, British Jazz Supplement, Biggest ever issue
- \*75 Roadside Picnic**, Mongo On Record - 1, John Scofield & Joe



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Yes! You can send in for as many bargain offers as you like (though please note that some issues do appear in more than one offer). Just send £5 for each bargain offer that you want, stating clearly the name of the offer and the issue numbers you've chosen. Overseas readers – please add £1 extra for post and packing.

AND DON'T FORGET! Single copies of some back issues are still available – check the list on the facing page to see which numbers are in stock. Prices are single issues £2.00, double issues £2.70 (inc p&p); overseas – single issues £2.40, double issues £3.20; airmail delivery – single issues £3.40, double issues £3.90. Send to: Wire Back Issues, Units G&H, 115 Cleveland St, London W1P 5PN.

## THE VINYL STRAW

A FRIEND bought me a copy of Dave Holland's *Extension* for Christmas. The next day I put the LP on for the first time and sat down to enjoy it. When the first side had finished my wife offered to turn it over. Now usually I don't let her go anywhere near my records but, full of Christmas spirit, accepted. Bad mistake. Firstly, she dropped it on the floor and upon resetting accidentally scratched the stylus across the entire disc. Hoping that it was only a surface blemish I put it on myself only to hear the click of a scratch.

Unwisely I castigated her. After all, it was a gift and an album I really wanted.

She took exception to my remarks — she detests jazz at the best of times — and proceeded to give the stylus a deliberate workout over the LP before throwing it at my feet. I picked it up and feverishly inspected the damage, hoping that it might be exchangeable. It was not. I threw it at her feet explaining in no uncertain terms that I expected a new copy. She proceeded to throw it back telling me that the scratches had probably improved the sound quality and I had a few hundred other "rubbery jazz" records that could do with the same treatment. Enraged by this I broke the record up with my hands, stuffed the pieces into the sleeve and then burst out laughing at the ridiculous nature of the situation.

Previously a vinyl-only fanatic, this incident has convinced me that the future lay in the marriage-friendly CD.

IAN SHIRLEY, London SW4

*For your troubles you win this month's bottle of Jim Beam. Perhaps your wife would like to pair it into your new CD player — Ed.*

## WIESBADEN? WHY NOT?

I'M PERFECTLY happy to renew my subscription, as *Wre* keeps me up to date with the most important events on the British jazz scene. *Wre* is also to be complimented on its healthy interest in the 'European' (will the British ever consider themselves European?) scene — the more musician profiles, concert and LP reviews, the better.

I cannot help but share your enthusiasm for Thomas Heberer and his collaboration with Dieter Maidscheld, *Chicago Breakdown*. My first glimpse of Thomas Heberer was at last year's SWF 3 New Jazz Meeting



## THE WRITE PLACE

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*The winner of our favourite letter wins a delicious bottle of Jim Beam whisky.*

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*Wre, Units GGH, 115 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5PN.*

in Mainz, where he stood out from the rest of an excellent pack.

In Wiesbaden's record shops, the usual reactions to Richard Cook's personal favourite *Different Makers* by François Landemann are as follows: 'Who?', 'Plainspate?' Never heard of it, 'No distributor'. The list of excuses is endless. Just where do I lay my hands on it?

One or two quick questions. Whatever happened to *Wre*'s very own cassettes? 001, 002, 003, silence. And dare I suggest Johnny Otis and his Orchestra's "Happy New Year, Baby" for next year's Xmas chart? Keep up the good work.

KEVIN WHITE, Wiesbaden

*We're currently planning the return of Wre cassettes — as CDs! See this month's Horwax — Ed.*

## DISCOGRAPHY

I AM currently completing research for a Sun Ra discography and would like to appeal to readers for information.

Although I am ideally seeking correspondence with an avid Sun Ra collector and fanatic, I would love to hear from anyone with a Sun Ra record other than those currently available in the shops, and particularly those on the Saturn label.

The basic information I require is as follows:—

- 1) Titles and catalogue numbers
- 2) Track listings
- 3) Recording dates and locations
- 4) If possible, photocopies of covers and labels

I would also appreciate any further information such as photographs, articles, interviews, videos, personal recollections etc.

Of course, my reason for doing this is because I love the music, and so I would also like to appeal to people interested in exchanging Sun Ra recordings. I still have a long way to go to complete my collection!

MARK WEBBER

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## HOO-RA!

CONGRATULATIONS on your article about and with Sun Ra in issue 78 of your magazine. I was literally glued to the pages, since it has been a long time since I have read such an interesting and, nevertheless, entertaining and amusing article.

As a student of journalism and languages (and writer for a jazz-magazine myself) I have rarely come across such a refined, obviously well-researched article, in any other country.

BIRGIT SALLETTMAIER, Salzburg

## SOUL ON ICE

*Wre* STANDS out as one of the most perceptive and interesting magazines on jazz and related musics. But although *Wre* is an excellent magazine, in typography and overall approach, its stance seems determinedly high-brow when it comes to the grass-roots of the British scene, at the expense of ignoring the interests of younger fans. I'm referring to the large proportion of people who got into jazz through the "hard-bop/soul-jazz/Blue Note reissue" route. A lot of people out here genuinely like soul-jazz, which *Wre*'s contributors frequently refer to as "in vogue" and "popular", with the same sort of disdain that academics used to regard jazz itself.

If it is so popular, why doesn't it get more coverage? It may not be that interesting to Mr Cook any more, who bought his Blue Notes years ago, but it is accessible and is a starting point for people to get into more sophisticated, "learned" forms of jazz. Next time a set of Japanese Blue Notes get reissued, go down to Tower Records or Honest Jons on the Portobello Road and see them snipped up, 19 year-olds forking out 200 quid on records which don't even get a mention in *Wre*. Go and see what's happening at the Fez, Jazz '90 or Dingwalls.

BEN PAGE, London W14

'Naim Attallah is a good interviewer. He is curious about other people; he is modest enough to let them say their piece without feeling the need to put his oar in; he is obviously a good listener. And he gathers some plums; Auberon Waugh talking about his mother, Nigel Dempster about his place in society and, most memorably, William Rees-Mogg about his childhood ...'

Lynn Barber, *Independent on Sunday*

'The overall effect is rather like being at a gentleman's club as the port is passed around. Witty, indiscreet but sometimes incoherent.'

Polly Samson, *Daily Mail*

'All in all it is an interesting list of fluent, influential men.'

Anna Ford, *Sunday Telegraph*

'Most of his subjects have opened up to Attallah to an unusual degree ... he has done his homework and that usually inspires a kind of flattered intimacy.'

Andrew Billen, *Listener*

# SINGULAR ENCOUNTERS

NAIM ATTALLAH

'What I like most about the book is its diversity and breadth of coverage.'

Betty Kirkpatrick, *Glasgow Herald*

'Information, humour and revealing personality flashes abound.'

Peter Grosvenor, *Daily Express*

'Part of Attallah's skill as an interviewer is that nothing shocks him. He greets each damaging admission with cries of delight and encouragement.'

Auberon Waugh, *Sunday Telegraph*

'The reader of SINGULAR ENCOUNTERS is a privileged eavesdropper ... Naim Attallah has achieved this level of personal strip-searching through the rapport he has with some of his subjects and diligent research in small things.'

Victoria Mather, *Literary Review*

'Naim Attallah proves himself to be a deft and sensitive questioner who appears to have done his homework and, more originally, to have listened to the answers provided by the objects of his curiosity.'

Emma Soames, *Evening Standard*

'Men are curiously eager to talk about their childhoods. The best thing in the book is Edmund White's account of his eccentric Cincinnati boyhood ... A.N. Wilson, in particular gives a giggly interview of overwhelming charm. Attallah is very conscious of that Englishman's fear of self-knowledge and the Englishman's hatred ... of laying himself open to embarrassment.'

Fiona MacCarthy, *Observer*

'Attallah's book - the vastly superior sequel to WOMEN - reveals what hilarious rot most men talk on the subject of the opposite sex ... When Attallah asks about feminism, many of his interviewees react to the very mention of the word by screeching and flapping like demented fruit-bats.'

Francis Wheen, *Spectator*



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